

**THE EXPERIENCES, CHALLENGES AND COPING STRATEGIES OF  
WOMEN RESIDING AROUND THE MINING COMMUNITIES: THE CASE  
OF DRIEKOP COMMUNITY, LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA**

**by**

**MAELANE IRENE LEKWADU**

Submitted in accordance with the requirements  
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In the subject

**SOCIAL WORK**

**at the**

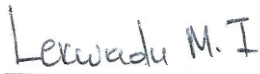
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SUPERVISOR: DR MR LEKGANYANE

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## DECLARATION

I, Maelane Irene Lekwadu (Student Number: 45878196) declare that, **The experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women residing around the mining communities: The case of Driekop community, Limpopo Province, South Africa** is my own work and that all sources that I have consulted, have been dully acknowledged within the text as well as at the end of the text in the form of a bibliography. I also declare that this work has never been submitted to any institution for any qualification.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lekwadu M.I." with a horizontal line underneath.

Maelane Irene Lekwadu

29 January 2020

## **DEDICATIONS**

This study is dedicated to; my mom Selabe Annah Lekwadu, the pillar of my strength, my brother Mahlogonolo Lekwadu and to my two children Pheladi and Testimony for all the support they gave me throughout the project. It is also dedicated to my late grandparents, Thomas Manyawane Lekwadu and Makopi Lekwadu who always encouraged me to go to school.

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## **ABSTRACT**

The plight of women who reside around the mining communities has not received the necessary attention from a research perspective. This concern prompted the researcher to compose a qualitative research aimed at exploring the experiences and challenges faced by these women. This was a case study research which was conducted among women who reside around the Driekop mining community in Limpopo province and designed from exploratory, descriptive, contextual and phenomenological in designs. The study was guided by the two theories: the feminist theory and the coping theory of Lazarus and Folkman. Relevant research ethical principles were upheld during the plenary phase wherein the research proposal was subjected to review by the Higher Degrees Committee of the UNISA's Social Work Departmental Research and Ethics Committee and throughout the duration of the study. The data which was collected through the semi-structured interviews was analysed using Braun and Clarke's six steps of data analysis, gave rise to several experiences and challenges which are presented in a form of nine themes and 13 subthemes. In striving to assure research quality, Guba and Lincoln's trustworthiness principles were adopted. Some conclusions are drawn from the process of qualitative research as an approach adopted to guide the study as well as the findings based on the collected and analysed data. Based on the conclusions of the research process and the research findings, the reader's attention is drawn to some recommendations which are proposed to inform practice, training and policy development.

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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **BACKGROUND AND ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY**

### **1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

The main focus of this chapter is to present the research plan that guided the study. It begins with the presentation of the general background and introduction to the study which culminates into the research problem and the rationale of the study. Flowing from the rationale of the study is an outline of the profile of the research site and the adopted theoretical frameworks which are followed by the research questions, goal, objectives and the plan for the research methodology. An outline of the plan for the research design and the research methods will precede the plan for ethical principles. The chapter is then concluded through a presentation clarification of key terms which are central to the study and an outline of the entire report.

#### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

The South African mining industry can be traced from as far back as the 18<sup>th</sup> Century exploitation of the diamonds in the Northern Cape and the discovery of gold in the former Transvaal (Harrington, McGlashan & Chelkowska 2004:65). These breakthroughs resulted in the eruption of migrant labour force which was characterised by an exodus of people, mainly men from within the South African borders and outside the borders, moving towards these mining areas (Harrington, et al. 2004:65). This exodus was largely restricted and primarily allowed for male migrant labourers and locals who were employed in the mines (Crush, Williams & Peberdy 2005:2).

Minerals as described by Abrahamsson, Segerstedt, Nygren, Johansson, Johansson, Edman and Akerlund (2014:5) create both opportunities and challenges for human welfare. Although a question of whether the discovery of natural resources is a blessing or a curse remain a contentious one, the reality is that new opportunities were created as

a result of these discoveries, with the mining sector being the main recipient of foreign direct investment (FDI) in Sub-Saharan Africa (Kotsadam & Tolonen 2013:1).

The industry also has some challenges in relation to the involvement of women (Kotsadam & Tolonen 2013; Naumann & Greiner 2016:9). In the case of mining communities, the challenges include high ratio of men to women and a transient labour force, which can easily change the marriage market and relationship formation (Kotsadam & Tolonen 2013:30). As noted by Chimhepo ([sa]), the mining sector is characterised by cultural and patriarchal collusion preventing women from claiming their rightful position to secure their rightful slice of cake. In Botha's (2016:252) view, mining has been socially organised in such a way that unequal social relationships are imposed on women and men with women having a subordinate position both within the mines and around the communities. Attesting to this point is the Farell, Sampat, Sarin and Slack (in Earthwork and Oxfam America's 2004:21) report, which reveals that very few opportunities are created in the mining industry for women.

Among those who happen to secure employment within this sector, discrimination and unfair treatments remain common (Lucas & Steimel, 2009:13; Hurley (in Earthworks & Oxfam America 2004:21). As noted by Sharma (2010:202), the working conditions of these women are characterised by "harsh climatic and structural" conditions as well as the physical separation from their loved ones. Women who reside around the mining communities often find themselves having an employment opportunity in a form of support or administrative responsibility on the one hand and on the other hand find themselves exposed to prostitution in brothels that sprang around the area Singer (in Botha 2016:252). In a South African study of internal migration in Kuruman in the Northern Cape for example, only one female was found underground despite the chamber of mines' stipulation that ten percent of the employees in the mining sector be women (Naumann & Greiner 2016:16). As a result of this, gender inequality continues to be perpetuated and women often miss out the potential benefits gained from the mines as opposed to their male counterparts (Botha 2016:252).

Within the community, women are severely affected by the negative impact of mining operations (Msibi, Kakae, Nkosi & Buhale 2017:3). For those who are unfortunate not to secure themselves employment in the mines, it is common to find them engaging in beer brewing, food production, prostitution and stokvels in order to provide for their families (Alexander 2007:14). Poverty and inequality around the mining communities often force women to engage in sex work which eventually expose them to HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases (Msibi et al. 2017:3). In some instances, mines occupy larger piece of land, which would traditionally be used by women for farming and therefore result in families riddling with hunger and poverty (Msibi et al. 2017:4).

Women who reside around the mining areas have little power and resources to influence any of the decisions or to resist any unfair developments, which could undermine their interests (Msibi et al. 2017:3). They are seldom are not consulted when decisions are made on the Msibi day-to-day operations, which may affect their daily lives, by the mines (Sharma 2010:201). Their family lives are also negatively affected with some reports (Sharma 2010:202) suggesting a higher divorce rate around the mining communities.

Due to their role in domestic labour and child care, women also carry a heavy burden of poverty because of some environmental problems relating to large-scale projects affecting their water quality and availability Hurley (in Oxfam 2015:1). For women who live in the mining settlements, their lives is subliminal and lacks basic amenities and services (Patel 2012:4). In Africa, the lives of women living around the mining communities are characterized` by poor economic conditions, political instability and environmental challenges giving rise to illegal mining activities which in turn expose women to social ills like poverty, crime, prostitution, premature marriages, rape and HIV and AIDS (Hove, Nyamunda & Mukwambo 2014:14).

Issues of health and hygiene are some of the concerns reported have some negative impact on women who reside around the mining communities and those who are employed within the mines. Mining as noted by Msibi et al (2017:3) often result in environmental pollution which in turn leads to terminal diseases like leukaemia,

miscarriages and deformities in children. This study was aimed at investigating the conditions of women who reside around the mining communities. Through this study, the researcher wanted to gain an in-depth understanding of the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women who reside around the mining communities. The study was conducted in Driekop community, which is located in Limpopo province.

Despite the scanty literature, there are some signs of women who are not benefiting from developmental initiative in the area of this study. As a woman and a social worker who grew up and worked in Driekop community, the researcher noticed lack of effective programs which are developed to address the issues that affect women and as a result, women remain in poor conditions and often find themselves exposed to various forms of abuse. As noted by Grobler, Schenck and Mbedzi (2013: 12), a social worker is a professional individual who works with people who are experiencing challenges and are unable to manage these challenges on their own. A social work study for the current study was therefore not only necessary to shed some light among the researchers, but also to inform social work practitioners about the conditions in which these women find themselves. It was on the basis of scanty literature on the subject under investigation and the lack of effective programmes for women in Driekop that the researcher composed a study with the hope of making a literature contribution to the research. The researcher also believed that despite this being a small scale study, it will shed some light and serve as some form of reference point for other researchers, policy makers and professionals and other people who may be involved in program designing and development.

#### **1.1.1. A profile of the study site**

Driekop community is a rural community located in Limpopo province of South Africa. The Limpopo Province covers the northern side of South Africa and the northern side of South of Zimbabwe. The Limpopo Province was part of the old Transvaal and it included many old homelands like Venda, Gazankulu and Lebowa, (South African National Road Agency (SANRAL), 2007:1). After the 1994 election, the Northern Transvaal was renamed the Northern Province and later on in 2002 the name was changed to Limpopo Province.

Limpopo is divided into five regions which strategically located according to the cultural inhabitants. Capricorn is the central region predominantly occupied by the Bapedi People. Waterberg is the largest region in the province with the majority of people being the Batswana people. The Vhembe region in the far north is dominated by Vhavenda and Vatsonga people. The Mopani region is located towards the Kruger National Park is dominated by the Vatsonga people whereas the Sekhukhune region is dominated by Bapedi and Ndebele people, (Lehohla, 2011:19; Pocket Guide to South Africa 2016:5).

It is located in Greater Sekhukhune District Municipality under the Tubatse-Fetakgomo local municipality and led by King Sekhukhune. Sekhukhune District Municipality have five local municipalities including the Greater Tubatse Local Municipality in which Driekop community is located. It is located north of the N4 highway around Middelburg, Belfast and Mbombela, and east of the N1 highway, around Groblersdal and Polokwane, (SANRAL 2007:5). The area is known as the Middelveld as it is located between the Highveld and Lowveld regions. It comprises 29 wards represented by one councillor per ward, and is administered by a local municipality that has its main offices in Burgersfort under the ANC Leadership with political parties like Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC), Democratic Alliance forming part of the council (Greater Tubatse Municipal Integrated Development Plan 2011/16:76). There is one main municipal office and three satellite offices, with the main office located in Burgersfort. Although Driekop falls within the municipality and led by the ward counsellors, there is still traditional leadership, with chiefs and Herdsmen still governing certain activities including land allocation in the rural areas.

In terms of the population demographics, Driekop is occupied by a divergent group, with the Bapedi group dominating all other groups. The Municipality has a total of 335 676 people, with women making a total of 52,2% of this figure and males making 47,8%. The Statssa data shows that 98, 2% of the population is Black Africans, 1, 31% is white population and 0,19% is the Coloured population. The Indian community makes a total of 0, 16% of the population while the Asian population were around 0, 08%. In terms of the languages spoken in Driekop, the 2011 Statssa report shows that 88,11% of the

population speaks Sepedi, with other tribes constituting 11,89% respectively (Statistics South Africa 2011:2).

Although there have been some improvements in terms of access to in Driekop, access to piped water is still the main challenge facing this community with some estimations that 80% of the households have access to electricity. Of the 80% of household with access to electricity, 75% use it for lights, cooking and heating. Other community members rely on, gas, paraffin, solar, wood, coal, and animal dung for various household cooking and heating activities, (Statistics South Africa 2011:2).

In the case of access to water, only 32%of the households have access to piped water (Statistics South Africa 2017:1). An estimated 16,5% have boreholes, 3,2% survive with rain water and 5,9% consume stagnant water. In some instances water shortages compel 16,9% of the population to rely on river water, 4,2% to rely on water vendors, 5,1% to use water tankers and 4,7% to rely on other sources of water (Statistics South Africa 2017:1).

Sanitation is also one of the challenges facing this community, with an estimated 6,8% of the households reported to have no toilets, 6,3% with access to flushing toilets, 1,2% with access to toilets that use septic tank to flush and 0,9%using chemical toilets. A total of 9,3% of the households rely on pit toilets that have some form of ventilation, 72,2% make use of pit toilets without ventilation and 1,5% still make use of a bucket toilet. Of the total households, only 7,9% have access to refuse removal by municipality, 0,9% make use of private removals, 0,6% resorts to communal refuse dump and 72,5% use their own refuse removal systems, (Greater Tubatse Municipality Integrated Development Plan 2016/17:50-51).

The employment status figures in Driekop reveal that only 20% of the population is employed and 50% of the population is not economically active<sup>1</sup>. Of the economically

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<sup>1</sup>An economically active population comprises all persons of either sex who furnish the supply of labour for the production of economic goods and services.



active population, 10% are discouraged to look for employment<sup>2</sup> and 15,7% does not have any income. A total of 6,5% are on the family income of between one Rand (R1) and 4 800 while 11,9% have an income of between R4801 and R9600 and 18.6% rely on an income of between R9601 to R19600. An income of between R19 601 and R38 200 is received by 17.7% of the population and only 2.5% receiving between R307 601 and R324 570, (Statistics South Africa 2017:2). The Greater Tubatse Municipal Integrated plan (GTMIP) (2016/17:108), shows that there are more employed males as compared to female in the formal employment category, the statistics also shows that more women are discouraged to look for employment as compared to males.

A huge part of the area is made up of villages that are spread throughout the northern part of the municipality. According to the land redistribution survey 2011, about 7,9% of the municipality is an urban area, 90,1% is tribal/traditional dwellings and 2% is a farming area.

With some advancement in terms of the 4<sup>th</sup> Industrial Revolution (4IR), one would expect areas like Driekop to demonstrate some progress in this area. Of the total population of this community, 88,9% have access to cell phones, 11,1% does not have any electronic communication gadgets, 2% have landline telephones and only 9,4 percent have access to internet and computers. Of those who have gadgets and computers, 8,9% have access to data either from home, work or cell phone and 80,1% does not have access to data, (Statistics South Africa 2017:3). With the lack of access to electronic or internet access it shows that there is lack of advancement and development with reference to the fourth industrial revolution practices.

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<sup>2</sup>A person who is discouraged from looking for employment has a discouraged worker effect which means someone have given up looking for a employment because there are no employment opportunities available.

Cultural activities like dikoma<sup>3</sup>, Kiba<sup>4</sup> and dipepetlwane<sup>5</sup> especially during some community events are common practices in this community. Although the area did not convert to Christianity during the colonial period, there are some Christian denominations across the community. Women are seen selling fruits and vegetables near the roads and around Burgersfort and Steelpoort Towns. Seventeen percent of the population uses public transport, (taxis and buses), (GTMIP 2011/16:78). Sekhukhune District Municipality Rural Development Plan (2016:40) shows that 28 percent of the Greater Sekhukhune population does not have any form of education, with only 1 percent able to access tertiary education. The district has 246 institutions in according to the 2006 Municipality Demarcation Board in (SANRAL 2007:8). Women face different challenges including access to basic services, Mahapa, in (SANRAL Community Empowerment Impact Assessment Report 2007:13) highlights that Limpopo is a unique province where there are more women than men, and women need transport to provide for their families including access to services like fetching water and wood.

Traditional laws, patriarchy, controlling access to resources and gender divisions make the life of rural women's needs different to others, (SANRAL 2007:14). The SANRAL REPORT (2007:18), highlight the assumption by community members that alcohol contribute to the accident on the R37 Road. Based on observation women participate in different social activities like food stokvels, burial societies and during funerals, community members support families that are affected contributing some money and some utensils necessary for the funerals such as firewood, water, dishes and so one. Males are the so called Diphiri<sup>6</sup> and their task is mainly to dig some graves. Traditional leaders assist in managing family disputes involving land and conflicts which are often referred by members of the families. The area appears to be a typical mining community as documented in some literature presented earlier in the introduction of this chapter.

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<sup>3</sup>Koma is Initiation schools for girls and circumcision schools for boys)

<sup>4</sup>Kiba is a Bapedi cultural dance wherein males play the drums and blow whistles while dancing.

<sup>5</sup>Dipepetlwane is just like Kiba but reserved for women. Women will also be dancing as they beat the drums during celebrations.

<sup>6</sup> The word Diphiri is a plural for a northern Sotho name for hyena. These are group of men around the community whose main responsibility during the funerals is to dig the graves.

Unemployed young men and women are often seen around the streets gambling with men playing dices next to some tuckshops and bottle stores and women playing cards.

### **1.1.2 The Research Problem**

Research problem as noted by Leedy and Ormrod (2013:27) is the basis upon which the research revolves. For Creswell (2014:20), a research problem is an issue or concern that needs to be addressed, resulting from a gap in the literature, conflict in research results, topics that have been neglected in literature, a need to uplift the voices of the marginalized participants and real-life problems found in the workplace or home. Research problem can be likened to thorn that provokes or pricks the researcher to initiate a study or a project in order to get a thorough understanding of a particular phenomenon.

Whereas the role of South African mining industries in creating employment is undisputable, the need to peruse the challenges, experiences and coping strategies in the life of women who reside around this industry remain critical. Firstly, it worth noting that very few mining industries are willing to employ women. This is despite the government's effort to have ten percent of women employed in mining industry. In 2009 it was found that only 26 percent of companies complied with the government's guidelines, which only formed six percent of women in the industry (Botha 2015:16). For those who maybe fortunate to be employed, they further experience challenges in the workplace. In a paper presented for a conference at the University of cape Town 's mineral law initiative, (Obiter 2016:1) notes that although women constitute thirty percent of the workforce in the mining industry, they are not always involved in decision making due to cultural or religious reasons.

A pool of literature around the subject of women residing around the mining industries is another problem prompting further studies in the subject matter. Researchers (Sam, Nightingale, Sunuc & Arnaud 2014:3) raise a concern regarding the dearth of research around women and the mining industry. The need for research in this area is particularly critical given the global commitment to end gender inequality. In other words, for gender

equality programs and other initiatives to be successful, we need to have a full understanding of the dynamics surrounding all areas in which both men and women find themselves for residential purposes from a social work point of view. Flowing from this discussion, the statement of problem for the current study was phrased as follows: *Commitment to gender equality, empowerment and liberation of women is a global agenda which requires coordinated programmes and activities to address all barriers that impact any development initiatives aimed at addressing gender equality. Despite this commitment, the scope and dimensions of the experiences and challenges and coping strategies of women who reside around the mining communities are not sufficiently documented.*

### **1.1.3. Rationale of the study**

The rationale or significance of the study addresses a question of the importance of the study, the benefits of conducting a study, the study's contribution to scholarly research and literature, the study's contribution to improve practice, policy and decision-making (Creswell 2012:119). When coming to the rationale of the study, there is a need to distinguish between different goals or reasons for doing a particular study which are the personal goals, the practical goals and the intellectual or scholarly goals which may include the researcher's desire to improve practice or situation, or the need to enhance career path (Tracey 2013:55; Maxwell 2012:24). In the current study, the researcher spent time consulting literature with the aim of finding out some research development around the subject of women in the mining industry.

While searching for literature, she found that there was limited literature available on women who reside around the mining communities, which suggested that there might be fewer studies conducted in the area. Among what she found during her literature search was around the subject of health and safety of women in mining, the psychological health status of women in artisanal mining, the work-life experience of women and dialogue with men about women in mining community and the environmental impact on women in mining, (Botha 2017:1; Kotsadam & Tolonen 2016:325, Muchadenyika 2015:2; Zungu

2013:1; D'Souza 2013:1). Although it worth appreciating that these studies highlight the difficulties experienced by women in mining, they did not explore the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women residing around the mining communities from a social work perspective. Some of these studies focused on the occupational culture and the physical demands of underground work and perceptions on of sexual harassment among women in mining positions sector (Botha 2015:1; Benya 2009:1). This resulted in a scanty of literature around the experiences and challenges faced by women in mining community, particularly from a social work disciplinary perspective.

## **1.2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The theoretical framework aims to guide the study and outline its logical underpinning (Grant & Osanloo 2014:13). The term theory refers to a collection of ideas or concepts which are aimed at explaining or describing a particular phenomenon (Moule & Hek 2011:172). In other words, theoretical framework is like a treasure map through which the hunter navigates. It enables the researcher to understand the phenomenon under investigation. In heeding to the suggestion made by Ngulube, Mathipa and Gumbo (2015:34) for researchers to locate their studies within a particular theoretical framework as early as in their proposal stage of the study, the researcher planned to anchor this study within the feminist approach and Lazarus and Folkman's coping theoretical framework. These theories are presented in the next section.

### **1.2.1. The feminist approach**

As defined by Tracey (2007:576), feminism is an approach that assumes patriarchy or male dominance exists and that it unfairly reduces the role and value of women and that change is preferable to the status quo. The feminist theory is traced from as far back as during the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Payne 2014:348; Teater 2010:92). It emerged out of a concern regarding methods and theories which informed social work practice which was predominantly created by men out of men's experiences, developments, views and needs and yet presumed to be neutral (Teater 2010:94). These views were challenged by feminist theory, which held that women differed from men in development and life

experiences and that these differences should be considered in social work practice (Teater 2010:94). Feminist researchers as noted by Doucet and Mauthner (2006:40) promote research which is not only on women, but also for women. This means that the researcher should embark on research, which will eventually contribute, to the liberation and betterment of women's conditions. Doucet and Mauthner's above-cited point is underscored by Dominelli (2002:7) who highlight the significance of feminist thinking in social work by saying that the feminist theory informs a limited number of women issues in social work. This suggests the need for more studies to address issues of women from the feminist perspective.

Feminist theory is founded on the following three main principles, (Pasque & Wimmer 2011:5):

- (a) Women have something valuable to contribute to every aspect of the world. Liberal Feminists suggests that through the legal and political avenues, women have the potential to change laws and politics in order to achieve gender equality (Sarantakos 2012:2). It was the researcher's anticipation that through this research, society can realise the plight of women residing around the mining communities, which will in turn enable programme and policy developers to consider the involvement of women when addressing the issues faced by women both in these communities and within the mining industries where some of them are employed.
- (b) As an oppressed group, women have been unable to achieve their potential, receive rewards, or gain full participation in society. This is particularly true given the preceding discussions in the introduction wherein some researchers reported that women have some difficulties both as employees within the industry and as residence around these mining industries.
- (c) Feminist research should do more than critique, by working towards social transformation. This means that research should in addition to critiquing the issues of women, give directive to some interventions that are required to address the plight of women.

Some of the concerns raised by feminist thinking are mainly in relation to women's conditions, the need to raise their voices, to promote their identities and to generally celebrate their diversity through women-centred practice (Payne 2014:348). The need for feminist studies from the social work disciplinary stance sprang out of the depreciation of the complexity of feminist analysis among social work practitioners, researchers and policy makers (Orme 2003:135). It was this depreciation of studies on the challenges faced by women who reside around the mining communities, which motivated the researcher to investigate the plight of women who reside around the mining community from the feminist theoretical landscape. By investigating the conditions of women through the feminist theory, the researcher believed that she would be setting precedence for some deliberate consideration of women's issues either as residents around the mining communities and therefore contribute towards the liberation of women and the maintenance of gender equality.

### **1.2.2 Lazarus and Folkman's coping theory**

The coping theory was developed by Lazarus and Folkman in 1984 and it centres around the cognitive appraisal and the coping theory. As defined by Lazarus and Folkman (1980:223), coping refers to a mental preparation to manage and deal with the internal and external forces and conflicts amongst those demands. It involves how individuals deal with stressful events and how they react to particular events. According to John, Robins and Pervin's (2008:736), coping can take place in three classes of response to stressful situations:

- Problem focused coping, which consists of an attempt to remove the obstacle or to minimize its impact. This reaction means that instead of mitigating the impact of the problem, the person deals with the problem itself. She copes by trying to resolve the problems itself.
- Emotion focused coping consists of an attempt to reduce the distress emotions caused by an obstacle (either by the reappraisal of the obstacle or management of the emotion). Unlike with the previous form of coping which involves resolving the problem itself, the person deals with her interpretation or attitude towards the problem.

A depressing problem may in this instance be interpreted as just a normal challenge that one has to go through in order to succeed in life.

- The third form of coping is the so-called avoidance coping which as the name suggests, involves avoiding the problem. The reality is that the problem is there and it exists but the person simply avoids dealing with it. Some forms of avoidance strategies include self-distraction, denial, substance abuse, wishful thinking or simply giving up the attempt to do anything about the problem.

What the coping theory suggests is that in order to understand women who reside around the mining communities, we need to keep in mind that their lives evolve around environments which are characterised by some form of stressors. They somehow find themselves in stressful environments, be it in their places of work or around their living environments. In coping with these challenges, these women either confront the source of their stress directly through problem focused coping or they cope through the emotion-focused coping which involves mitigating the impact of the stress by dealing with their own perceptions, emotions and reactions in order to mitigate these stressful events. Besides the two forms of coping, some may resort to avoidance by simply continuing with their lives as if nothing happens while the stressful events still exists in their lives. The relevance of coping theory for the current study was found in the study's aim which is partly to understand the strategies adopted by women residing around the mining community.

### **1.3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS, THE RESEARCH GOAL AND OBJECTIVES**

In qualitative research, the researchers strive to get answers for some research questions, to address some research objectives and achieve a particular research goal. The research question is closely linked to the research goal and objectives. In the next section, the research question that guided the study will be presented.



### **1.3.1. The research questions**

A research question provides a clear view of what the study aims to accomplish by collecting and analysing information provided by the participants (Schutt 2012:27; Blaikie 2014:17). In other words, the researcher collects and analyse the data in order to get some answers for the research questions. It enables the researcher to manage the research project by making the research details explicit by narrowing the original research problem into a more concise statement” (Moule & Hek 2011:28& 77). This suggests the significant role played by the research question in giving the study some focus. In Creswell’s (2013:134) view, research questions can be in a form of the “what question”, the why question and the how question which are aimed at describing, explaining and understanding a particular situation.

It can therefore be stated that a research question clearly outlines what the researcher intends to uncover about a particular situation or environment. For Swanborn (2010:25), without the research question, researcher is obliged to continue to collect the data without satisfying the research goal. In formulating the research question, Moule and Hek (2011:79) suggests that researchers consider several factors such as (1) an answerable question; (2) availability of time and resources; (3) the need and availability of supervision and support; and (4) the ethical issues involved in the process. A good research question as noted by Moule and Hek (2011:77) must be clearly formulated and should focus on what is to be understood. In the current study, the research questions were formulated as follows:

- (a) What challenges do women residing around the mining community of Driekop face?
- (b) What experiences do women residing around the mining community of Driekop have in relation to being women residing in this area?
- (c) What coping strategies do women residing around the mining community of Driekop adopt in managing their challenges?

### **1.3.2. The research goal**

The main aim of a research project is to understand how and why certain things happen in a particular social environment (Maxwell 2012:30; Schutt 2012:47; Flick 2011:89). It outlines what the researcher hopes to achieve through the research study (Moule & Hek, 2011:28). As noted by Blaikie (2014:8), there are three main purposes of a study, which are to discover, describe and elucidate the circumstances of a particular situation. This means that we mainly conduct research studies to understand the social world in which things happen. We are interested in how people live their lives, how they interact with one another and how they make sense of such interactions. In the current study, the goal was formulated as: *to develop an in-depth understanding of experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women residing around the mining community of Driekop*. In order to achieve the set research goal, the objectives were formulated. The next section deals with the research objectives.

### **1.3.3. Objectives of the study**

In his description of research objectives, Kumar (2011:64) distinguishes between the objectives and the sub-objectives, with objectives stipulating the fundamentals of the study and the sub-objectives outlining the specific actions to be taken to achieve the objectives. In this study, the following objectives were formulated for the current study:

- (a) To explore and describe the experiences of women who reside around the mining community of Driekop;
- (b) To explore and describe the challenges faced by women who reside around the mining community of Driekop;
- (c) To explore and describe the strategies adopted by women who reside around the mining community of Driekop in managing their challenges

The sub-objectives that were formulated for the study were as follows:

- (a) To obtain a sample of participants comprising of women who reside around the mining community of Driekop in Limpopo province, South Africa;
- (b) To conduct semi-structured interviews aided by open ended questions contained in an interview guide with the above-mentioned sample;
- (c) To sift sort and analyse the data using Braun and Clarke's (2006:17) six steps of data analysis in order to-
  - ✓ Describe the findings in relation to the experiences and challenges faced by women who reside around the mining community of Driekop and strategies which they adopt in managing their challenges.
- (d) To interpret the data and conduct a literature control in order to verify data;
- (e) To draw conclusions and proffer some recommendations about the research process followed and the research findings.

#### **1.4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Researchers should in their compilation of research plan, outline the suitable methodology, which will be adopted to yield solution to the research problem (Fox & Bayat 2007:143). As defined by Sarantakos (2013:29), research methodology refers to a research strategy that translates ontological and epistemological principles into guidelines on how the study is to be conducted. In other words, research methodology includes the research approach and strategies that will be adopted to guide the study.

##### **1.4.1. Research Approach**

In this study, the researcher's plan was to adopt qualitative research as a research approach to yield answers to the research questions and to address the research problem. Qualitative research aims to unveil people's comprehension and perceptions about life and how they ascribe their conceptions to daily lives in their social environment during their interaction with other people (Creswell 2014:4; Whittaker 2012:9).According

to Shelton, Smith and Mort (2014:272), qualitative research is defined as a group of techniques used by the researcher to dig beyond the numerical data. It is an approach to research through which the findings are produced without using any measurements or statistical analysis (Hamilton & Finley 2019:2).

#### *1.4.1.1 Qualitative Research Process*

Qualitative research is a study conducted by following prescribed step by step process to gather information, interpret to understand the study concern, (Hossain 2011:145; Straights & Singleton 2018:69). For the researcher to understand the phenomenon will employ the research steps by Bless, Higson-Smith & Kagee (2011:17).

##### ✓ **Step 1: Select and formulate problem**

The research process begin with the researcher identifying the problem to be addressed, and this process include defining the problem, explaining reasons behind the chosen study and conducting literature review to get a clear picture of the study concerned, (Creswell 2012:58).

##### ✓ **Step 2: Choose the research design**

Research design give reasons for conducting the study in terms of aims, objectives and questions and the methods of data collection to be employed in the study, (Creswell 2012:204).

##### ✓ **Step 3: Describe the sample and sampling procedures**

The sample refers to the population to be selected for the study and the methods of selection to be used during the study.

##### ✓ **Step 4: Collect the data**

Data collection takes place in different forms including conducting face to face interviews, observing participants go by their day to day activities, (Creswell 2012:260).

✓ **Step 5: Analyse the data**

Qualitative researcher follows steps to analyse the data and group them according to themes and sub-themes to understand the participants and reach a conclusion from the study.

✓ **Step 6: Interpret data**

From the analysed data the researcher develops themes and sub-themes, conducting literature to contrast or argue to substantiate the findings.

✓ **Step 7: Draw conclusions**

From the analysed data and interpreted data the researcher draws conclusions.

✓ **Step 8: Write a research report**

Writing a research report includes providing a dialogue that supports the themes

According to Yin (2011:7), the following characteristics are embedded in qualitative research:

- Qualitative research studies people's meanings in the real world. As qualitative researchers our main interest is on people and their natural lives. We do not manipulate or simulate the living conditions of the people, we visit the people in their natural environments where they live their lives naturally and study them.
- In qualitative research, the views and perspectives of the research participants are represented. The findings of qualitative research represent as much as possible, the experiences of the participants as narrated by them in their own ways. Although the researcher might come in as an interpreter of those experiences, the interpretation is constrained within the views expressed by the participants. This is evident in the direct quotations of the participants themselves in support of what the researcher might be interpreting.
- Qualitative research covers the context in which people live and its conditions. As qualitative researchers, we adopt a holistic approach to research. We don't only

pay attention to the narratives shared by the participants, we also consider the manner in which they express themselves and the conditions and contexts in which such narratives were made.

- The main contribution of qualitative research can be seen in the existing or emerging concepts that help in explaining social behaviour of human beings.
- In qualitative research, multiple sources of evidence are used. The holistic approach adopted by qualitative researchers supports the multiple sources of data. In this instance the researcher pays attention to what the participants are saying while at the same time documenting the manner in which they are expressing themselves and the cultural, religious, social or economic factors that might somehow accompany what the participant might be expressing. All these aspects become integrated as sources of data to provide a broader understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

Anastas (as cited in Yegidis, Weinbach & Myers, 2018:126) identifies the following key characteristics of the qualitative research approach

- The method and procedure are flexible in response to the emerging findings during the study;
- The researcher made use of unstructured data which is in the form of words and the actions of those who lived through the phenomenon under investigation;
- The scope of qualitative research includes the observational context of the study, particularly the context wherein the phenomenon under investigation occurs naturally;
- The scope of qualitative research includes the subjective experiences of the researcher;
- Qualitative studies should be clearly located within a specific epistemological tradition (i.e. positivism, pragmatism, phenomenology, interpretivist or constructivism and critical, normative science) due to the significant differences of these traditions.

In view of Fox and Bayat's (2007:143) suggestion for researchers to justify their selection

of a particular research methodology, it is significant to justify the reasons for adopting qualitative research in this study. As described by Hewitt (2007:1149), qualitative research answers questions that relates to the participants' experiences and meanings as they emerge in the dimensions of their social worlds and lives without using statistical procedures (Hamilton & Finley 2019:1).

The primary reason for the researcher to opt for qualitative research lies in the overall aim, objectives and the research questions set for the proposed study. The aim, objectives and questions formulated for the current study required the researcher to look into the participants' personal experiences as they happen in their natural environments (their living and working environments). This made the researcher to believe in qualitative research as a method suitable to look into the meanings as they happen in the natural context (Yin 2011:7) to be an appropriate method. Given the aim of this study being to *develop an in-depth understanding of experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women residing in mining community and their coping strategies, qualitative research is believed to be an appropriate research approach with its focus on building an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under investigation* (Yin 2011:71).

## **1.5. RESEARCH DESIGN**

Research design refers to an outline or structure to be followed in gathering information from participants, how the data will be examined and the procedures relevant to that study, (Walliman 2016:37; Creswell 2013:5; David & Sutton 2011:204). This means that a research design is an outline of the process to be followed in collecting the data, the means by which the data will be examined and the specific systems to be used in the study. As noted by Marshall and Rossman (2016:101), the strengths of qualitative research lies in its exploratory, descriptive and contextual nature. The emphasis on the suitability of exploratory, descriptive and contextual designs for qualitative research motivated the researcher to consider these designs together with phenomenological and case study research designs to be the appropriate research designs for the current study. These are the research designs are explained in the next section.

### **1.5.1. Explorative research design**

Qualitative research is not just a mere intellectual exercise; it is rather an exploratory and a discovery process (Dickson-Swift, James, Kippen & Liamputtong 2009:62). Exploratory research design strives to uncover the experiences of people by trying to comprehend what values they attach to their lives (Babbie 2016:90; Schutt 2012:13; Bless, Higson-Smith & Kagee 2011:47). A typical exploratory research design as described by Swanborn (2010:30) is flexible and open towards the phenomenon under investigation. This means that exploratory research design does not follow a strict or tight process. Exploratory research design follows what emerges from the participants' experiences and their environment to shape how the research process unfolds. In her application of the exploratory research design, the researcher planned to enable the participants to describe their experiences in their own ways and paces. Her plan was to the stories told by the stories told by the participants and what transpires from their natural contexts in which these stories are told.

### **1.5.2. Descriptive research design**

Once the researcher has explored the participants' worlds, he or she then planned to describe what she has explored (Fox & Bayat 2010:30). By descriptive research, Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014:162) refers to the qualitative representation that enables the reader see what the researcher has seen and to hear what the researcher has heard during the research process. In other words, descriptive research design enables the researcher to present the participants' narratives and the observations made by the researcher in the exact manner that he or she has heard or observed. It is used to give distinct explanations of certain actions, meanings and behaviours of the individuals or communities being studied, (Babbie 2016:91; Schutt 2013:13; Bless et al., 2011:47). The main aim of descriptive research design is to describe people's experiences as they happen in their daily lives.

Given the aim of this study, which was to develop an in-depth understanding of the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women residing around the mining



communities, the researcher deemed descriptive research design to be a suitable design to enable her to describe the participants' experiences and challenges to the reader. With descriptive research, the researcher hopes to obtain detailed description on the challenges and coping strategies adopted by the participants in managing such challenges. Through this design, she expected to allow the participants an opportunity to describe their experiences and challenges and the strategies they adopt in coping with the challenges in their own pace without any interruption. Once these experiences and coping strategies have been recorded through the digital recording device and analysed, the researcher planned to further provide a detailed description by integrating the participants' narrations with some existing literature and the adopted theoretical frameworks.

### **1.5.3. Contextual research design**

The definition of contextual research design as provided by Farlex (in Ngunyulu 2012:25) refers to the consideration of the context relating to a phenomenon under investigation. In highlighting the significance of considering the context in which a study is conducted, Holstein and Gubrium (2011:15) highlight the centrality of context in qualitative research. In another instance, Burns and Grove (in Mamabolo 2009:48) describe contextual research as a type of research that focuses on events as they occur in a natural setting. In applying the contextual research design, the researcher's plan was to pay attention to the overall context in which the phenomenon emerge which is the mining community of Driekop.

### **1.5.4. Phenomenological research design**

Qualitative social work research as described by Tufford and Newman (2010:80) aims to explore and harness the lived experiences of the participants. The current study is therefore not different from any other qualitative research with its focus on the experiences and challenges of women residing around the mining community (which are lived). Given the main interest of phenomenological research design being the lived

experiences of the participants and its suitability for questions that address the meanings from experience (LeVasseur 2003:409), the researcher deemed it to be an appropriate research design for this study. Phenomenological research design enables researchers to use thick description and close analysis of the participants' meanings (Starks and Trinidad 2007:1373).

In implementing the phenomenological research design, the researcher planned to ask the participants questions that relates to their daily lives in the mining community and use probes to elicit the meanings they attach to their lives. She will planned to report the findings through thick description, which will include the direct quotes from the participants' own narratives.

#### **1.5.5. The case study research design**

A case study is another research design, which the researcher planned to adopt in order to attain the purpose of this study and address the research questions. As described by Creswell (2014:241), a case study design is a type of qualitative research design through which the researcher uses a variety of data collection procedures to collect a detailed information of either a program, an event, an activity, a process or one or more individuals. It seeks to understand one particular incident in which there might be little information or awareness (Walliman 2016:40; David & Sutton 2014:207; Yin 2012:5). In Swanborn's (2010:3) view, a case study design is particularly appropriate when the question to be answered is broad and the researcher aims to gain a thorough understanding of the case.

An Instrumental case study design was particularly adopted as the type of case study design for this study. This type of a case study is used to accomplish something other than understanding a particular situation. It provides insight into an issue or helps to refine a theory. The case is of secondary interest and plays a supportive role, facilitating our understanding of something else, (Willig 2001:1). The case is often looked at in depth, its contexts is scrutinised and its ordinary activities detailed to assist the researcher pursue external interest. The case may or may not be seen as typical of other cases, (Baxter &

Jack 2008:549). The questions posed for this study and its aim made the instrumental case study research design to be an appropriate design to guide the study.

## **1.6. RESEARCH METHODS**

In their definition of the term research method, Harding (in Doucet & Mauthner 2005:38) refers to it as techniques used by the researcher in gathering evidence. Methods as described by (Igwenagu 2016:8), is the means or process through which data is collected, research methods help collect data and find solutions to problems, (Rajasekar, Philominathan & Chinnathambi 2013:5). In my understanding research methods are procedures or scientifically approved process used to gather information in a study.

### **1.6.1. Population, sampling and sampling techniques**

In research studies there is a need for some requirements to choose individuals or groups who are relevant or appropriate to be part of the study (Creswell 2014:183, Flick 2011:70; Marshall & Rossman 2011:105). These individuals or groups are called population. The term population refers to a group of people from whom the research findings will be determined (Walliman 2016:110; Schutt 2012:136; David & Sutton 2011:226). For the purpose of the current study, the population was all women who are residing around the mining community of Driekop either for employment or for permanent residential purposes. As noted by some researchers (Moule & Hek 2011:29; Mack et al., 2005:5), it is not necessary for the researcher to contact the entire population to collect the data. Besides it would not be practically possible for researcher conducting a small scale study such as the current one to reach-out every woman from this large community. Part of the researcher's plan was therefore to draw a sample from this population. It is therefore on this impracticality of accessing every woman from the Burgersfort area that the researcher will consider drawing a sample form this population.

#### *1.6.1.1 Sample*

The selection of a sample or sampling, as described by Moule and Hek (2011:29) is one of the significant part of the research process. A sample refers to part of the population from which the researcher collects the data to draw the findings (Moule & Hek 2011:29; Fink 2010:89). In other words, a sample refers to individuals or groups chosen from the specific population and the chosen people are to be part of the study. Sampling can be either probability or non-probability in nature (Moule & Hek 2011:29; Fink 2010:91; Fox & Bayat 2007:54). Non-probability sampling on the one hand is a sampling technique which does not involve all the population in the study, but involves the selection of individuals who are suitable for the study (Sarantakos 2013:177; Flick 2011:71).

#### *1.6.1.2 Probability sampling*

Probability sampling on the other hand is concerned with identifying individuals who will be able to share information (Sarantakos 2013:177; Flick 2011:71). Whereas in probability sampling the researcher can determine the probability of each member's likelihood of being sampled, non-probability sampling does not make such provision to the researcher (Moule & Hek 2011: 87-94). Among the types of probability sampling are, simple random sample, systematic random sample, stratified random sample and cluster sample (Moule & Hek 2011:87-94; Fox & Bayat 2007:55-58).

#### *1.6.1.3 Non-Probability sampling*

A non-probability sampling on the other hand can take various forms such as convenient sampling, quota sampling, purposive sampling, and snowball sampling (Moule & Hek 2011:94-98). For the purpose of this study, the researcher planned to employ the non-probability sampling techniques in a form of purposive sampling is commonly used in qualitative research (Miles et al. 2014:31; Devers & Frankel 2000:263). With purposeful sampling, the researcher select participants who have some experience necessary for the purpose of the study under exploration by considering the criteria of inclusion (Walliman 2016:115; Sarantakos 2013:177; David & Sutton 2011:232). Purposive

sampling is a sampling technique, which involves the researcher's consideration of the participants' experience in the information required for the study. In the case of the current study, the researcher considered the participants' experiences about being residents of Driekop mining community as one of central features in designing the inclusion criteria. In responding to Moule and Hek's (2011:85) and Miles et al.'s (2014:31) recommendations for researchers to assign an eligibility criteria to the target population, the researcher developed the following inclusion criteria for sampling:

- *Any woman who is over the age of 18 and who is:*
- *Residing around the Burgersfort Mining community<sup>7</sup>*
- *Willing to voluntarily consent and take part in this study;*
- *Willing to be interviewed and tape-recorded around their experiences of residing in the mining community;*

In planning for this study, the researcher did not rule out the possibility of some participants who may come forward to refer her to some whom they think might also add value to the study. For this reason, she also planned the adoption of snowball sampling as an additional sampling technique. In snowball sampling, the researcher contacts few participants and ask them to refer her to others who meet the inclusion criteria as set for the study (Walliman 2016:115; Schutt 2012:157; David & Sutton 2011:232; Fox & Bayat 2007:59).

#### *1.6.1.4 Sampling through gatekeepers*

A gatekeeper as someone who control access to an institution or an organisation, and they may be formal or informal (Singh & Wassenaar (2016:42). Whether formal or informal (without the power to refuse a research) gatekeepers always have however the potential to delay progress of the research. Formal gatekeepers have the power and authority to give permission or decline the researcher opportunity to conduct the study,

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<sup>7</sup>This criterion was amended in responding to the flexible nature of qualitative research methods and process. See Chapter Two section 2.3 for further details on this amendment.

(Wanat:192). It is therefore crucial for the researcher to always show some respects toward the gatekeepers. In application of purposive sampling and snowball sampling techniques, the researcher planned to identify participants through the royal house and determine their willingness to take part in this study. Once the participants were identified, she planned to take them through the process of informed consent by providing them with all information around the study and clarify any of the questions that they might have. The researcher's plan was that once this is done, she will then implement snowball sampling by asking a few of those who agreed to participate to assist her in identifying others who may also be staying around the mining community and willing to participate in the study.

As much as the sampling techniques are significant, so is a question of sampling size. When coming to sampling size, Malterud, Siersman and Guarsora (2016:3) urge qualitative researchers to ascertain the sampling size. In ascertaining this sampling size, the concept of data saturation is of particular significant (Malterud et al., 2016:1753; Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest & Namey, 2011:5). Data saturation refers to the point during data collection wherein the data yields no new insight (Malterud et al. 2016:1753; Mack et al. 2011:5). In the current study, the researcher planned to pay close attention to the data by analysing it as she collects in order to identify the point of saturation and end the data collection process.

#### **1.6.2. Preparation for data collection**

Gaining access to participants as noted by Feldman (in Johl & Rengathanam 2010:42) requires some preparation on part of the researcher depending on the level of access required. In preparing for access, researchers are urged to record on and play back the recording device to make sure that it is functioning correctly (Johl & Rengathanan 2010:42). In addition to the above, suggestion proposed by Johl and Rengathanan, the researcher also planned the following as part of her preparation for data collection:

- Read through some literature on how to enter the research field, how to negotiate access to the research sites and how to actually conduct the interviews;

- To explain the purpose of the study and the risks and benefits thereof to the participants so that when they make decisions on whether or not to participate, they do so with full knowledge of what they are getting themselves into;
- To explain the logistical and technical aspects relating to the study, including the information regarding the venues, the duration, the language to be used during the interviews as well as the use of recording device to record the interviews;
- To explain the ethical principles which were to be considered for this study as well as the participants' right to withdraw at any time of the study without negative repercussions if they so wish.
- To allow the participants an opportunity to discuss any expectations that they might have in relation to the study and clarify them so that there are no misunderstandings left unclarified.

Part of the plan for this study was that once the researcher is satisfied with her readiness in terms of data collection, data would be collected. The following section presents the manner in which data collection was planned.

### **1.6.3. Methods of data collection**

Qualitative data collection refers to the gathering of non-numeric data by using techniques like interviews and observations (Moule & Hek 2011:170). In other words, qualitative researchers are more interested in data which is in non-numeric forms such as the words, pictures and documents. The commonly used methods of data collection in qualitative research include observations, interviews, document reviews and audio-visual materials (Creswell 2014:191; Flick 2011:104; Blaikie 2010:205). The use of interviews is particularly suitable to collect qualitative data, particularly data which involves sensitive topics (Hewitt 2007:1149; Edwards & Holland 2013:2).

Just like in any other qualitative research studies investigating the sensitive topics like the experiences and challenges faced by the participants, the interview was considered a

suitable data collection technique for data collection in the current study. An interview is a communication activity wherein researchers gather information by a way of asking questions and allowing the interviewee to respond (Whittaker 2014:90; Sarantakos 2013:278; Dudley 2008:153). In particular, the researcher will use the semi-structured interviews, which will be guided by an interview guide.

The individual face-to-face semi-structured interviews was particularly considered a suitable type of interview for the current study. The individual face-to-face semi-structured interviews are interviews with a guide and questions that can be changed as the interview continues, depending on the responses provided by the interviewee and the intention of the study (Walliman 2016:126; Sarantakos 2013:178; David & Sutton 2011:245). In other words, a semi-structured interview is a form of interview wherein the researcher prepares themes, which are in a form of open-ended questions in order to guide the interview. In conducting qualitative research interviews, researchers need to possess skills, which are beyond those that are required in ordinary conversations (Fox & Bayat 2010:73). According to Hewitt (2007:1153), listening, attending, reflecting and summarising are some of the key skills that are used to guide the interview process.

Interviewers as noted by Campbell, Adams, Wasco, Ahrens and Sefl (2009:607) should listen and empathise in order to document the participants' stories and receive what they call "something very useful from the experience". In this study, the researcher planned to use attending, listening and empathy as some of the skills to elicit the participants' experiences, challenges and coping strategies. Whereas it was expected that listening and empathy will enable the researcher to develop a detailed understanding of their experiences, empathy was expected to assist her in establishing and maintaining a rapport. The questions that were formulated to guide the data collection process include the biographical questions and the interview questions. As part of her plan, the researcher envisaged to formulate the biographical questions as follows:

- How old are you?
- What is your marital status?
- What is your occupation?



- What is your level of education?
- Who is staying with you in your household?
- How long have you been staying in this community?

In trying to get answers for the questions and to address the research goal and objectives, the researcher planned to pose the following questions:

- Can you please tell me about your experiences as a resident of this community?
- Can you please tell me about the benefits of being a resident in this community?
- Please share with me the challenges that you face as a resident of this community?
- Which of the challenges that you have shared above resulted from the mining activities?
- Which of the challenges that you have shared above are development related?
- Can you please share the strategies that you use to manage the above challenges?

It is crucial to note that the researcher included a pilot test as part of the research plan. The next section details how the plan for a pilot study was outlined.

#### **1.6.4. The pilot testing**

A pilot test refers to the steps taken by the researcher to examine different levels of the study including examination of the researcher herself (Maxwell 2013:66; David & Sutton 2011:123; Marshall & Rossman 2011:95). The aim of a pilot test as described by Kim (2011:193) is to prepare for the qualitative research. This means by conducting a pilot study, the researcher is enabled to ascertain the feasibility of the study by determining or identifying challenges that may arise during the actual study and redefining areas that needs to be redefined. It affords the researcher an opportunity to correct any mistakes which could be methodological or technical in nature. In Marshall and Rossman's (2016:105) view, a pilot study helps the researcher to understand herself and to eliminate the barriers relating to recording devices and trust issues relating to the research. In piloting this study, the researcher planned to apply the same methods that were planned

for the main study and to follow the same process that was to be followed during the main study. The plan was to examine the findings of the pilot test and where necessary make some improvements.

#### **1.6.5. Methods of data analysis**

As recommended by Ngulube, Mathipa and Gumbo (2015:38), researchers should provide a detailed explanation on how they intend to conduct their data analysis and explain the methods and techniques to be used for such analysis. Data analysis refers to a process whereby the researchers gather common statements or experiences from the collected data with the intention of reaching a conclusion about the study at hand (Schutt 2012:321; David & Sutton 2011:324; Marshall & Rossman 2011:207). It is a process of creating meaning by processing, summarising and interpreting the raw data (Moule & Hek 2011:167).

According to Ngulube (2015:132), data analysis involves transformation of the raw data by searching, evaluating, recognising, coding, mapping, exploring and describing trends, themes and categories emerging from the raw data in order to interpret them and provide their underlying meanings. It is a process, which enables the researcher to reach a conclusion of a research study by identifying common experiences and perceptions of the research participants. For the purpose of the current study, the researcher planned to employ the six phases of data analysis as proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006:16) to analyse the collected data. In line with Braun and Clarke's data analysis process, the researcher planned to:

- *Familiarise herself with her data by reading it several times while noting some key ideas as they come to mind;*
- *Generate initial codes by coding the key features of the entire data sets and collated them to codes;*
- *Search for themes by transforming the codes into preliminary themes and classified all the data sets under each of these themes;*

- *Reviewing themes by checking if they clearly reflect the coded extracts and the data sets;*
- *Defining and naming themes by conducting an ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme and the entire analysis story;*
- *Conclude an analysis by writing-up an analysis report which will serve as the research findings.*

Throughout the research process, particularly the data collection and analysis phase, the researcher should continuously assure quality. The plan for quality assurance was also put in place for the current study as presented in the next section.

#### **1.6.6. Method of data verification**

By data verification, Rothenberg ([sa]), refers to an assessment of data with an intention of satisfying certain restrictions and relationships and conforming to some standards. In another definition, Morckel (2016:3) state that data verification is “a process of evaluating the completeness, correctness, and conformance/compliance of a specific data set against the method, procedural, or contractual requirements.”

Unlike in quantitative research where reliability and validity is proven, qualitative research determines the trustworthiness of the study (Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson and Spiers (2002:14). In verifying qualitative data, Guba and Lincoln developed four criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability (Shenton 2004:64; Morrow 2005:251-252; Morse et al. 2002:14).

##### **1.6.6.1 Credibility**

In order to achieve credibility, Tracy (2010:843) recommends thick description, triangulation, member checks, analysing negative cases, performing prolonged engagements, participating in peer debriefing and engaging in reflexivity.

✓ *Using thick description to convey the findings*

In order to ensure the credibility of the information gathered, the researcher should provide thick description of the environment and participants being investigated for the reader to get a clear insight and determine the truth about the study, (2004:69).

• *Triangulating the data, the researcher and the methods*

The researcher to get more information, different methods of data collection like face to face interviews, observation and using different research methods and researcher may be used, (Anney 2015:277).

✓ *Performing member checks*

Member checks in research may take place during the research process or after the study wherein the researcher ask participants to clarify statements said during the interviews and the researcher may also give participants to read transcribed material to verify if is the correct version of what they said, (Shenton 2004: 68).

✓ *Analysing negative cases*

Literature review allows researcher to learn and understand the negative cases associated with the study concern and impacting on the researcher's plan in the study including amendments to the study, (Shenton 2004:67).

✓ *Performing prolonged engagements*

To gain more information about the study, the researcher needs to spend and invest more time in the field to see if there are any changes in the field, (Anney 2015: 276).

✓ *Participating in peer debriefing*

Shenton (2004: 67), in conducting peer debriefing the researcher may consult with the supervisor and peers to discuss the process and the discussion might assist in the researcher exploring their research skills.

✓ *Engaging in reflexivity*

The researcher should keep a diary recording daily events reflecting experiences, emerging awareness and assumptions and biasness they might have had before the study, Morrow (2005: 254).

*1.6.6.2 Ensuring transferability*

In determining transferability of the study, the researcher should provide detailed information relating to him or her as the data collection instrument, the research participants, the contexts in which the research was conducted, the research process and her relationship with the participants (Morrow 2005:252). Morrow (2005:252) believes that these aspects will enable the reader to decide on whether or not the findings can be transferrable.

*1.6.6.3 Ensuring dependability*

Dependability, which addresses a question of whether the study is consistent throughout the process, can be attained by tracking the emerging design and maintaining an audit trail and chronologically detailing all the research activities (Morrow 2005:253).

*1.6.6.3 Ensuring Conformability*

Conformability tries to ensure that what the researcher presented is the experiences of participants and not the expressions and views of the researcher, (Shenton 2004:74). The researcher's plan for the current study was to provide as detailed information as possible about the process followed during the study. This detailed information included the plan for the study, which is in a form of chapter one (the current chapter), how the plan was actually implemented which is in a form of chapter two and the research findings which are supported by the actual extracts from the interviews conducted with the participants (Chapter Three). The researcher also planned to present the conclusions in a detailed fashion to enable the reader to make connections between the research plan (Chapter One), how the plan developed (Chapter Two) and what was found (Chapter Three). The

researcher also planned to adopt reflexivity which involves identifying her actions and paying a close attention to how her actions and decisions affect the development of the research process. In order to assist her in documenting the research activities and her actions and decisions, the researcher planned to make use of diary to record all the actions, events and activities as they unfold.

## **1.7. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Research ethics are the critical aspects to be considered by every researcher (Denicolo Long & Bradley-Cole 2016:70; Creswell 2014:92; Fox & Bayat 2013:148). Ethics refers to a set of standards and rules designed to guide researchers' conduct during research process (David & Sutton 2011:30; Marshall & Rossman 2011:47; Walliman 2011:261). Researchers have different views in relation to which ethical principles to consider but common to them is ensuring voluntary participation, ensuring informed consent, avoiding harm (Moule & Hek 2011:34-41; Fox & Bayat 2013:148; Le Roux 2015:92-97) and ensuring confidentiality and anonymity (Miles et al., 2014:62). In this study, the researcher planned to consider informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity, avoiding harm, debriefing participants and managing the data. These ethical principles are discussed in the next section.

### **1.7.1. Informed Consent**

An informed consent refers allows for the individual or group to agree in taking part in a study, based on the information and awareness around the purpose of the study, its benefits and an opportunity to accept or decline the request to participate in the study (Walliman 2016:87; Sarantakos 2013:9; Bless et al. 2011:142). In another definition, Moule and Hek (2011:168) refer to informed consent as permission, which can be either verbal or non-verbal, provided by the participants to indicate their voluntary willingness to take part in a study. In heeding to informed consent, the researcher aims to ensure that all participants are informed of the nature, the process and aims of the study before they could take part. The researcher planned to inform the participants both verbally by

explaining the process and in writing where they were expected to during their own time, read through the informed consent document and make their independent decisions. In Moule and Hek's (2011:37) view, the researcher should be open to the participants by offering them a right to withdraw at any time from the study. The researcher's plan was also to ensure that the participants are provided with verbal and written explanations around their right to withdraw at any time of the study without incurring any repercussions.

### **1.7.2. Anonymity and Confidentiality**

Anonymity refers to the process of ensuring that the participants' names and identities are not included in the published materials and recordings, while confidentiality ensures that the names are kept secret and known only to the researcher (Sarantakos 2013:9; Bless et al. 2011:143; David & Sutton 2011:47). As defined by Moule and Hek (2011:166), anonymity means that the researcher ensures that the information is presented and managed in such a way that it does not in any way link to a particular participant. For the purpose of the current study, the researcher keep information secret by using pseudonyms to avoid linking any of the participants with recorded information. She also planned not to share any information with anyone without the consent of the participants.

### **1.7.3. Debriefing**

Research has the potential to cause psychosocial or emotional harm to the participants and it is important for the researcher to guard against such occurrences (Sarantakos 2013:18; Bless et al. 2011:143; David & Sutton 2011:47). In highlighting the significance of debriefing Felzmann (2009:107) state that as researchers, we have a responsibility to create opportunities for debriefing particularly in cases where research activities are of a sensitive nature or where there is intense engagement on part of the participants. In the current study, the researcher anticipated some sensitive experiences from the participants and prepared a social worker who will provide debriefing to participants who may suffer any harm because of this study.

#### **1.7.4. Data Management**

The researcher has a responsibility to ensure that the information gathered including the personal information and recorded data is protected from anyone who has no right to access it (Witthaker 2012:80; Flick 2011:220). In Fox and Bayat's (2013:76) view, researchers should consider storing their data in consideration of the possibility of retrieval. In ensuring data management, the researcher planned to follow Flick's (2011:220) advice for researchers to store the data physically in a safe and lock it away so that nobody gains access to the data who is not supposed to have access. She planned to store the hardcopies of data in a locked cabinet in her house and the electronic data in her password-protected computer.

### **1.8. CLARIFICATION OF KEY CONCEPTS**

The key concepts which are central to this study are defined in the next section. These terms are experiences, challenges, coping strategies, mining community and women.

#### **1.8.1. Experiences**

By experience, Soanes, Spooner and Hawkers (in Mokoka 2015:46) refer to any event that could result in an impression on a person. In another definition, Laureti (in Scott 1991:782) refers to an experience as *"the process by which, for all social beings, subjectivity is constructed. Through this process, one places oneself or is placed in social reality, and so perceives and comprehends as subjective (referring to, originating in, oneself) those relations – material, economic, and interpersonal – which are in fact social and, in a larger perspective, historical."* For the purpose of this study, the term experience was defined as any event through which women who live around Driekop mining community have subjectively undergone.



### **1.8.2. Challenges**

The term challenge is defined by Collins (2010:287) as an event or situation which is demanding or stimulating. For the purpose of this study, the term was considered to be any situation or event that is demanding or stimulating for women.

### **1.8.3. Coping strategies**

The coping strategies means refers to the strategies employed to cope with a particular situation. Coping may be defined as a mental and behavioural efforts made to master, tolerate, or reduce external and internal demands and conflicts among them, (Krohne 2002:04). For the purpose of the current study, the term coping strategies was considered to mean any strategies that are adopted by women who reside around Driekop mining community to relieve the pressure caused by sources of their difficulties or challenges.

### **1.8.4. Mining community**

To understand the meaning of mining community one should first understand what the meaning of a community is. According to Visser (2007:5), a community is a group of people in a specific geographical area and time and it can refer to a social system, to a construction of a way of life or to a socio-political organisation. Traditionally a community refers to a group of people in a geo-political or physical area (McKenzie, Pinger & Kotecki 2012:2; Visser 2007:6). According to McKenzie et al (2012:6), a community may have common elements such as membership – a sense of identity and belonging, common symbol systems, shared values and norms, mutual influence, shared need and commitment to meeting them and emotional connection, experiences and mutual support. A mining community can therefore be understood to be a community wherein mining and its related labour activities take place.

### **1.8.5. Women**

Soanes and Stephens (2008:1658) define a woman as an adult human female, or a female worker or employee. In the context of this study, women refer to the female

members who reside around the mining community of Driekop. These female members can either be residing in this community on a permanent basis or temporarily for the purpose of accessing the economic benefits provided by the mine.

## **1.9. PRELIMINARY OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS**

According to Quick and Hall (2015:133), the format of a research report differs, depending on the institutional requirements. In other words, there is no universal format or structure of a research report. The current format was therefore also influenced by the institutional requirements. This report comprise of four chapters. In Chapter One, the reader was introduced to the background of the study and the research plan which guided the study. Specific attention was placed on the research problem, the rationale of the study, the theoretical framework, the research questions, goal and the objectives. A plan in relation to the research methodology, the research design, the methods and ethical principles was also outlined in this chapter, followed by the definition of key terms which are central to this study.

Whereas Chapter One introduced the study and the research plan, Chapter Two describes the manner in which the research plan as introduced in Chapter One, was actually implemented. Specific attention is given to the manner in which qualitative research as an approach and as planned for the current study and introduced in Chapter One, was implemented and the manner in which a plan for the research design and the methods as introduced in Chapter One, were implemented. In conclusion, this chapter will present the manner in which the ethical principles as introduced in chapter One, were actually implemented during the research process.

Chapter Three of this report presents the research findings. Here specific attention is placed on the demographic profile of the participants and the themes and sub-themes that emerged from the process of data analysis. A conclusion which is in a form of a chapter summary will then summarise the main aspects covered by the chapter.

Chapter Four which serves as the last chapter of this report will present the summary, conclusions and recommendations based on the research process and the research findings. Like the preceding chapters, Chapter Four will also be concluded by a summary which summarises the main points covered in the chapter.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **APPLIED DESCRIPTION OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH PROCESS**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

Chapter One of this report introduced the reader to the background of the study, wherein a discussion around the background of the phenomenon of the mining communities which culminated with the research problem and the rationale for the current study, was presented. The theoretical frameworks and the research questions, the goal, objectives and the plan around the qualitative research methodology and the methods that were expected to guide the study were also introduced in that chapter. The current chapter addresses the requirement for transferability which demands that researchers detail the process which they followed in order to allow the reader an opportunity to determine its transferability. In the current chapter, the focus is on a detailed explanation on how the qualitative research plan as introduced in Chapter One, was implemented throughout the study. Firstly, the researcher will justify her reasons for deciding to apply the qualitative research process following the method that she has chosen and then proceed by explaining the nature of qualitative research as applied in the current study. The discussion will then proceed to the manner in which the research design, methods and the ethical principles as introduced in Chapter One, were applied during the research process.

#### **2.2. THE NECESSITY FOR AN APPLIED DESCRIPTION OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH PROCESS**

As described by Corbin and Strauss (2008:5), qualitative research have flexible model, constructed before the research project commences and they are generally presented in such a way that they leave a room for modification during data collection period. This means that even if the researcher has clearly outlined a research plan, what transpires

during the actual process often dictates the review and sometimes amendments of the initial plan. Marshall and Rossman (2011:89) share similar sentiments in their assertion that part of the research proposal should present an implementation plan, which must be flexible to offer an opportunity for modifications of the research may change with progress. It is therefore crucial for the researcher to in addition to presenting the research plan, also explain in a detailed fashion, how the plan was implemented, which is the main purpose of the current chapter.

As indicated earlier that Chapter One of this report outlined the plan which was developed to guide the research process, the researcher found it significant to explain how the adopted plan unfolded during the actual research process. This practice is in line with Morrow (2005:252) suggestions for researchers to repeatedly explain as much as possible the research process leading to the findings through an audit trail in order to allow the reader to understand and keep track of the activities of the project so as to apply the findings in their respective contexts. Curtin and Fossey (2007:2) also call for transparency in qualitative research, which include detailed description of the strategies used to give rise to the research process and the research report. For Shenton (2004:69), the research report must be sufficiently described to allow the readers an opportunity to determine the extent of their confidence in transferring the results and conclusions presented to other settings.

The researcher needs to provide sufficient thick description in order to provide the reader with a full understanding so that they can compare instances of the phenomenon described in the research report with those that they may have seen emerging in their contexts (Shenton 2004:7). The need to clearly explain how the research plan unfolded is considered in this context, to be some form of accountability checks on part of the researcher in view of the principle of transferability as one of the techniques aimed at ensuring trustworthiness of the study. Transparency involves making the process in its steps and the decisions that influenced the production of data understandable in their broadest sense (Flick 2018:125). To further enable the reader's broad sense of

understanding, the description of the manner in which qualitative research approach was applied is presented in the next section.

### 2.3. AN APPLIED QUALITATIVE RESEARCH PROCESS

Although the main aim of the current chapter is on application of the qualitative research process, it is crucial to provide the context in which application occurs by hinting on some theoretical aspects guiding such application. Researchers and authors seem to have divergent views with regard to the process which ought to be followed in conducting qualitative research. According to Creswell (in Hossain 2011:146), qualitative research process evolves through the eight step process while Holloway and Wheeler (2011:32) believe that the process unfolds through the four stage process. Although Bless et al. (2011:17) shared similar views with Creswell in terms of the number of steps through which the process evolves; they differed in terms of the activities involved in these steps. Table 2.1 below presents the steps of qualitative research process by different authors.

Table 2.1: An outline of the research process by different authors and researchers

Creswell 2002	Holloway & Wheeler (2011)	Bless, Higson-Smith and Kagee (2011)
Identify a research problem	Identify the problem	Select and formulate the research problem
Review literature	Collect the data, analyse and assess the problem	Choose the research design
Select the participants/sample	Plan and implement change identified from the research findings	Describe the sample and sampling procedures
Collect the data	Evaluate the study	Collect the data
Analyse the data		Analyse the data
Interpret the data		Interpret results
Report the research		Draw conclusions and recommendations
Evaluate the research		Write a research report

As indicated in the above table, researchers and authors seem to differ in terms of the process which should be followed in conducting qualitative research. The process which was followed during the implementation of this study was guided by the eight stages of the research cycle of Bless et al. (2011). Below is an explanation of how these steps were followed:

- *Step 1: Select and formulate the problem*

Before she could begin with the study, the researcher first identified the research problem. In doing so, she spent time reading through some literature around women and the mining communities. She also visited the study site, observed and held some informal discussions with key people around the area particularly women about issues that commonly affect the women and availability of relevant interventions. From both these discussions and the literature consulted, the researcher realised a gap of knowledge around the experiences, challenges and coping strategies adopted by women who reside around the mining communities. This became identified as a problem and the problem was defined as introduced in Chapter One (see section 1.1.1). Once the research problem was identified and clearly defined, the researcher considered the relevant design for the research study, as explained in the next step.

- *Step 2: Choose the research design*

Details around the research design are presented further in the chapter (See section 2.4). At this stage it is crucial to point out that the choice of the research design was guided by the research aim, questions and the objectives.

- *Step 3: Describe the sample and sampling procedures*

Flowing through from the choice of research design, the researcher then moved to conduct sample and apply the adopted sampling procedures. Like the choice of the research design, the sample and sampling procedures were also guided by the research aim, questions and objectives.

- *Step 4: Collect the data*

The process of data collection followed immediately after a sample was identified and the sampling techniques. The plan around data collection was presented in Chapter One (Section 1.6.3). The details around how the data collection actually unfolded during the implementation of the plan is presented later in the current chapter (Section 2.5.3).

- *Step 5: Analyse the data*

Analysis of the data was conducted during the data collection process and after the completion of data collection. The plan for data analysis was presented in Chapter One and the actual process of data collection (i.e. how data collection actually unfolded), is presented later in this Chapter (See section 2.5.3 of the current chapter).

- *Step 6: Interpret the results*

In interpreting the results, the researcher made use of some existing literature and the adopted theoretical frameworks. Chapter Three is dedicated for this particular step and it presents the research findings in the context of some existing literature and the adopted theoretical framework.

- *Step 7: Draw conclusions and recommendations*

Once the data was collected and interpreted, the researcher had to draw some conclusions and forward some recommendations. This will be presented in Chapter Four, specifically dedicated for this stage.

- *Step 8: Write a research report*

Once the study was concluded and recommendations are made, then the next steps is to write a research report. The report required in terms of this stage is this dissertation, which details how the research was first composed at the planning stage, how it unfolded



during the implementation stage and the interpretation stage as well as how the conclusion and recommendations were drawn.

## **2.4. QUALITATIVE RESEARCH APPROACH AS UNFOLDED IN THIS STUDY**

An introduction to qualitative research as an approach adopted for the current study was presented in Chapter One (see section 3.1). In setting the scene for an explanation of the manner in which this approach was implemented, it worth revisiting the meaning of this approach, Thyer (2012:341) defines qualitative research as a first hand involvement with the social world. It is an approach that studies people as they live their lives, in their own communities using different data collection methods and designs and methods which are adaptable and changeable as the process unfolds (Marshall & Rossman, 2011:92, Babbie, Mouton, Voster, & Prozesky 2011:270).

In this study, the researcher had a first hand in contact with the community through the use of gatekeepers (i.e. the royal authorities and some key leaders in the community) who helped her to go through the community and make some observations and meet other prominent people in the area. These observations and conversations with people enabled the researcher to collect the data relating to Driekop as a natural setting wherein participants were living their lives. The detailed information around Driekop community as a setting wherein the study was conducted was presented as a profile of Driekop as a study site in Chapter One (Section 1.1.3). The interview guide that was used for the study involved the use of techniques allowing the researcher to collect data relating to the settings in which the participants were living their lives as presented in Chapter Three of this report (Section 3.2 and table 2.2).

One of the features of qualitative research as described by Shelton et al. (2014:271) is that it focuses on building an in-depth understanding of the topic or phenomenon under investigation. As recommended by Gray (2011:167) that the researcher gain as much information from the participants, the researcher used probes to allow participants to share their experiences, challenges and coping strategies as detailed as possible. In an

interview with Motloung the researcher urged her to elaborate by saying, “Can you please explain further, especially the issue of women not benefiting” and in response the participant indicated the challenges women face with the recruitment process in the mine. This technique enabled the researcher to build an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

According to Yin (2011:7), qualitative research has the following features:

- Qualitative research, the views and perspectives of the research participants are represented. Like Yin (2011:7), Creswell (2009:176) states that qualitative research is a form of interpretative inquiry in which researchers make an interpretation of what they see, hear and understand. During and after the data collection the researcher analysed the data to create themes and subthemes. In reporting these findings, the researcher made sure that they fully represent the views of the participants. This she did by using the direct quotations to support her presentation of the participants' view.
- The main contribution of qualitative research can be seen in the existing or emerging concepts that help in explaining social behaviour of human beings. The themes in qualitative research as suggested by Creswell and Poth (2018:44), should reflect multiple perspectives and meanings of participants. In the study once the data was collected, some themes and subthemes were created and they are presented in detail in Chapter Three of this report. The themes that were developed from the data and presented as the findings are considered to be a contribution to some of the existing concepts in the phenomenon of women who reside around the mining communities as suggested by Yin (2011:7).
- Qualitative researchers make use of different sources of data such as interviews, observations and documents to explain or describe the phenomenon of their interest (Babbie et al. 2011:289). In the current study, the researcher did not make use of individual face-to-face semi structured interviews as the only source of data,

she also used observation of the emotions and the environment in which the data was collected. The observation enabled her to document some field notes, which later assisted in explaining the participants' experiences, challenges and coping strategies and the context in which they manifested. Things like the participants' economic conditions and educational levels for instance could clearly give a clear understanding of the intensity of challenges faced by these women.

Anastas (in Yegidis, Weinbach & Myers 2018:126) identified the following key characteristics of qualitative research approach:

- The method and procedure are flexible in response to the emerging findings during the study. Qualitative research designs are not rigid they can change once the researcher has entered the field of research, Creswell and Poth (2018:44). The researcher was prepared to make any amendments of the initial research plan should a need arise. This became evident among other things in her adoption of the semi-structured interviews as a data collection instrument since it allows for adaptation as the interviews unfolds. Flexibility of the methods and procedures in the current study became evident when the researchers met more women who were both residents of Driekop and at the same time employed by the mine and were strongly willing to share their experiences both as employees and as members of the community. In this instance the researcher considered the holistic nature of qualitative research and amended one of the original inclusion criterion<sup>8</sup> to accommodate these women.
- The researcher makes use of unstructured data which is in a form of words and actions of those who lived through the phenomenon under investigation to describe it. The data which was collected for the current study was mostly in words. It was generally

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<sup>8</sup>The inclusion criterion, "Residing around Driekop mining community" was amended to read, "residing or residing and working around the Driekop mining community".

unstructured and the participants were allowed an opportunity to express themselves as freely as they could in line with the study aim, objectives and questions.

- The scope of qualitative research includes the subjective experiences of the researcher. Although the presentations of the research findings are the views of the research participants, they are an interpretation by the researcher, of what the participants shared with her. This makes the presentation of the findings to be the subjective interpretation of the participants' narratives.
- Qualitative studies should be clearly located within a specific epistemological tradition (i.e. positivism, pragmatism, phenomenology, interpretivist or constructivism and critical, normative science) due to the significant differences of these traditions. The current study was guided by the interpretivist paradigm. According to Antwi and Kasim (2015:3), interpretive paradigm is underpinned by observation and interpretation of data collected. The participants were afforded a space in which they expressed their experiences, challenges and coping strategies in their own words. The findings as reported in the current study are an interpretation by the researcher, of the participants' interpretations of the meanings that their living conditions have for them.

## **2.5. APPLICATION OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN**

In Chapter one (Section 1.5), the concept of research design was introduced and defined. Just to recap on the meaning of research design and to set the scene for the manner in which it was applied, a research design is a detailed plan incorporating the procedures to be followed by the researcher in collecting and analysing the data (Davies & Francis 2018:529). As indicated in Chapter One (see section 3.2) the initial plan of the researcher was to make use of the four research designs which are explorative research design, descriptive research design, phenomenological, and contextual research designs. These research designs were adopted and implemented as envisaged in the original plan (Chapter One). The manner in which these designs were implemented is presented in the next section.

### **2.5.1. Explorative research design**

Social science research intends to explore environments or topics where there is little know and bring to the fore new information, (Babbie & Beniquisto 2010:92; Babbie 2010:80). The concept of exploratory study in social research as defined in chapter one (Section 3.1.1) occurs when the researcher examines new interests or when the subject of study is limited and relatively low, (Babbie 2010:93). In the current study, the researcher intended to understand the experiences of women residing around the mining community of Driekop through an explorative study.

In exploring these experiences, she approached the participants and the field in which the study was conducted (the study side), with an open mind, ready to learn from both the participants and the research process. She observed and posed questions in order to get acquainted with the participants and their settings. This she did by among other things, using the semi-structured interviews which allowed participants time and opportunity to explain their experiences, challenges and coping strategies while listening attentively to their narrations and where necessary asking for clarity. An interview conducted with Motshidi could serve as an example on how exploratory design was observed. During this interview, Motshidi was asked about her personal experience in the community she said, "...Lack of employment opportunities, that has been my done of my bad experiences.....". The researcher then realised that the participant still wanted to express more and the researcher then used non-verbal communication like Mh..., maintain eye conduct and nodding to encourage the participant to allow the participant to share more of her experiences. That is when the participants explained that the challenge women face by saying, "... And, I feel like when you don't attend meeting especially the new community forums even if there is a post you are never considered....". The researcher ensured that her personal biases and presumptions did not interfere with the participants' expressions by asking questions and allowing participants to express themselves.

### **2.5.2. Descriptive research design**

Descriptive research design is aimed at describing people's actions and activities in their own communities as they live their lives, (Babbie and Beniquisto 2010: 93). In employing descriptive research design the researcher provided the participants an opportunity to describe their experiences, challenges and coping strategies without any interruption. An interview with Mohlwareng was evident to this, "*....there are women whom their husband does not wants them to work in the mine...*". The participants' descriptions were further described in the research findings as supported by the quotations from the interviews.

Implementation of descriptive research design also took a form of detailed demonstration of how the research plan was designed (as presented in a form of Chapter One) and how it was implemented as presented in this chapter (Chapter Two). The researcher also strived to provide detailed description of the manner in which the process unfolded and what she has finally found through the research findings. To further enhance descriptive research design, she supported her interpretation of the research findings by the direct quotations from the conversations with the research participants.

### **2.4.3. Phenomenological research design**

Phenomenological research design as described in Chapter one (Section 3.1.3) aims to understand the lived experiences of the participants by trying to answer questions like how is it like to experience a particular event? (Leedy and Ormrod et al. 2015:273). Phenomenological research design does not focus on one individual but describe the experiences of several individuals about a particular circumstance (Creswell 2018:175). A phenomenological study was employed throughout the study. In applying this design, the researcher acknowledged the fact that she was also a woman looking into the issues of women in the mining industry. She continuously became conscious of this fact as the study unfolded and at times acknowledged instances wherein she felt that she was personally involved in the process for example allowing participants' feelings to influence her regarding the crime in the community.

The researcher also refrained from relying on information received from community members and local newspapers about the community. She instead relied on the participants and their lived experiences about this community. The information collected from the community members, leaders and the newspaper was rather used to supplement the lived experiences as shared by the participants themselves. In trying to understand the realities and lived experiences of these participants, the researcher purposefully selected ordinary women who were residing around the mining community and asked the questions in such a way that they allow them to describe their lived experiences. For example during the interview with Mohlwareng, she started by asking a question on how is it for her as a woman to reside in a mining community. This method of questioning provided participants like Mohlwareng to share their lived experiences and challenges in their own ways, for example Mohlwareng explained that she finds the mining community to be a good place because of the employment opportunities she has as a result of the mines. Similar mode of questioning was also adopted during the interview with all other participants including Mmilo who spoke about the goodness of residing in the mining community because of the employment opportunities that come with it.

#### **2.5.4. Contextual research design**

As described by Burns and Grove (in Mamabolo 2009:48), contextual research refers to a type of research which focuses on events as they occur in a natural setting. The context within which activities or actions takes place and individuals makes sense of their lived experiences and it is crucial for qualitative researchers to understand and take it into consideration during the study (Creswell 2015:8; Marshall & Rossman 2016:3; Rossman & Rallis 2012:8). Qualitative researchers do not only strive to understand the context of the study in the natural environment but also the social and cultural contexts that shape certain behavioural patterns (Wagner et al 2012:126).

Cultural context can be addressed when the researcher is able to describe the socio-cultural characteristics of beliefs, behaviours, norms of the study population (Hennink, Hutter and Bailey 2011:288). During the study the researcher considered the not only

focused on the interviews but also gave attention to the physical environment of the study which afforded her an opportunity to describe the profile of this community (see Chapter One, section 1.1.3). In collecting this information, she spoke to key people from the community and observed the area and scrutinised some newspapers and government reports like the Statssa to gather some data around things like the political leadership of the area, service delivery in the area, the dominant religions, languages and tribes and so on. She also gave attention to each individual participant's contexts by looking at their profiles as presented in Chapter Three (See section 3.2).

#### **2.5.5. The case study research design**

A case study is a detailed and comprehensive analysis of a single case like a community, a school, a family, an organization and even an event using different methods of data collection (Bryman 2012:66). In the context of this study, the community of Driekop was considered to be a case study. In this investigation an in-depth understanding of the Driekop case was enhanced by paying attention to the physical location of the community, its political and traditional leadership, availability of services and other factors. The individual participants were also considered to be some individual cases making up this community and attention was also placed on their profiles as presented in Chapter Three (See section 3.2 and 3.3 respectively).

### **2.6. THE RESEARCH METHODS AS APPLIED**

Once the research design has been defined, the researcher must specify the research technique utilised for the study which includes the method of data collection, data analysis and data interpretation, (Marshall & Rossman 2011:106 & Creswell 2009:15). Since the definition and description of the term research method was provided in Chapter One (Section 1.6), this section will only explain the manner in which the research methods were applied. Below is a description of the manner in which the research methods were implemented.



### **2.6.1. Population, sampling and sampling technique**

The first part of this section explains how the population, sampling and sampling techniques were implemented during the research process. Like all other sections of this chapter, this section will not place more emphasis on the definition or description of the respective terms, besides laying a foundation for the application of these terms.

Straits and Singleton (2018:106), highlights that the definition of the population is a two way process, firstly the researcher needs to identify the target population from which she would like to apply the results and secondly she must specify the general criteria for inclusion. As defined in chapter one (section 1.4.1.1) the population of this study was all women who are residing around the community of Driekop either for employment or for permanent residential purposes. From this population, a sample was drawn through an inclusion criteria (Marshall and Rossman 2011:102; Babbie and Rubin 2010:108).

Given the flexible nature of qualitative research which allows for flexibility and adjustments and possibly amendments as the study progresses, the inclusion criteria as presented in the plan (Chapter One, Section 1.6.1) had to be adjusted in responding to the emerging women who were residents and at the same time employees who were sharing their experiences both as residents and community members. This led to the amendment of the second criterion to accommodate experiences that emerged from the field. As indicated in section 2.3 earlier in this chapter, the criterion, “residing around Driekop mining community”, was adjusted to, “residing or residing and working around the Driekop mining community”.

Once the population was clearly defined and demarcated, the researcher had to draw a sample. Sampling is an enabling factor for the researcher to study a relatively small part of the targeted population by selecting or recruiting a small portion of the population, (Sarantakos 2013:7). In qualitative research, there are no rules in terms of the sample size (Wagner 2012: 88), however qualitative sample size is determined by the nature of data collected and the study will only stop when there is no new information emerging,

(Sarantakos 2013:183; David & Sutton 2011:233). The recruitment of participants depends on the study the researcher needs to study or conduct, (Leedy and Ormrod 2015:279). Below a detailed description of how the sampling techniques adopted in the study were implemented.

#### *2.6.1.1 Purposive sampling*

As discussed in chapter One (Section 1.6.1) purposive sampling is a sampling technique through which the researcher intentionally and decisively selects or recruits participants with the potential to provide rich information about the study (Sarantakos 2013:232; Wagner, Kawolich & Garner 2012:93; Walliman 2016:115). The researcher 'experience and knowledge plays a valuable role during the recruitment and selection of the participants using the criteria for inclusion as introduced in Chapter One and amended (see Chapter One, Section 1.6.1 and footnote 7 in this chapter). The process followed in implementing purposive sampling was as follows:

The researcher first met with one of the community leaders and introduced herself and the study to this leader. Because this leader was working very closely with the tribal authority, the researcher found it easier to make an appointment with the tribal authorities and introduced herself and formally requested a permission to conduct the study in the community (See the attached request letter in Addendum D). Permission was then granted by the tribal authorities (See the attached Addendum E letter) and the leader who introduced her to the tribal authorities further introduced her to some women who were residing around the community. Some of the women were known to the researcher through her friends and colleagues and she approached them using these networks. Eventually, a total of eight women was identified and recruited through this method. Once she realised that the number might not be enough to yield enough data, she then requested two of these women to suggest others whom they think may have an interest in the study. Thus she implemented the snowball sampling technique, the process of which is explained below.

### *2.6.1.2 Snowball sampling*

Snowball sampling was introduced in Chapter One (Section 1.6.1) as a sampling technique through which the researcher identifies and selects few participants and request that they refer other people who might be willing or interested in the study (Walliman 2016:115; Schutt 2012:157; David & Sutton 2011:232; Fox & Bayat 2007:59). In implementing snowball sampling the researcher made use of two women whom she met through the community leader to further assist her in finding other women who reside around the area and who may be interested in the study. She was given some telephone contact numbers which she used to contact them and requested a meeting, to which they responded positively. A total of five women was eventually identified and recruited through this method.

### **2.6.2. Preparation for data collection**

The need for researchers to prepare for data collection is as crucial as the data collection process itself. According to Lofland (in Babbie et al. 2010:334), researchers need to prepare themselves for the study. This preparation as noted by Johl and Rengathanan (2010:42), should include among other things, ensuring that the recording equipment is working properly. As part of her preparation for the current study, the researcher made time to go through the instruments of data collections (i.e. checking if the research questions make sense, if the biographical questions are relevant to the study and if the digital recording device is properly working). She also spent time familiarising herself with the data collection process by perusing some literature on qualitative data collection process. The researcher also prepared participants by explaining the purpose, objectives and questions of the study and her expectations from the participants. A period of two weeks was reserved to explain the process and allow the participants time to clarify issues that they felt were not clear to them.

### **2.6.3. Data collection**

According to Gray (2014:386), researchers in qualitative research may use semi structured interviews to explore the meanings participants' holds in their lives. As Indicated in Chapter one (see section 1.6.3) the initial plan was for the researcher to make use of the semi-structured interviews as a method of data collection. This plan was implemented as adopted and the details around the manner in which it unfolded are presented in this section. As described by Leedy and Ormrod (2016:160), semi-structured interviews allow the researcher to create a rapport with participants and therefore gain their cooperation. In conducting the interviews, the researcher followed the following process:

- The researcher started by re-introduced herself to the participants and gave them an opportunity to also introduce themselves by indicating their preferred names.
- Shem then explained the purpose of the study again to ensure that both the researcher and the participant are on the same page, and also to clarify any questions the participants might be having.
- The researcher then explained to the participants the ethical principles to be observed during the interview, including the fact that that their personal information will remain anonymous and confidential.
- Once the administrative matters were agreed upon, the researcher started the interview process by asking participants about their feelings in residing in the mining community in setting a tone for the process.

### **2.6.4. The pilot testing**

Prior to the commencement of the study, the researcher conducted a pilot study using the same methods that were introduced in the research plan (Chapter One) and following the same procedure presented earlier in the current chapter (see section 2.3). Two women

who met the inclusion criteria were identified and recruited for the purpose of a pilot study. The two participants were then interviewed, the data was analysed and verified through the same techniques adopted for the main study. Through this process, the researcher learnt few lessons particularly her more focus on what the participants were saying and forgetting to guide their responses in line with the interview guide as informed by the question, goal and objectives of the study, for example in an interview with Motshidi the researcher asked the participants about her feelings in residing in the community and the participant talked about her feelings towards the community leaders and the researcher allowed her to continue longer before redirecting the questions to the participant as a women.

A pilot test also provided the researcher with an opportunity to review some of the questions because some participants felt that she was asking the same question differently. The researcher during the study explained to participants the questions and clarified confusions, for example during the interview the researcher first asked participants about their life experiences in general, then followed by their coping mechanisms and later asked them about their personal challenges whether at home or at work, followed by a question on coping mechanism of the challenges experienced, thus allowing participants to separate the two questions and eliminate any confusion. The explanation helped the participants who were wondering whether they should only talk about experience in a positive way and challenges as negative experiences. She also learnt the importance of having some form of question guide to assist her in collecting the biographical data and some observations that she made as the interviews progresses (See Addendum H).

### **2.6.5 Analysing the data**

As indicated in the research plan for this study (Chapter One Section 1.6.5), the researcher intended to adopt Braun and Clarke's (2006:87) six phases of data analysis. Analysis was conducted according to the plan and the process which was followed is provided below:

- Phase One: The researcher began the process by familiarising herself with the data. In doing so, she transcribed the data herself and repeatedly read through it. As she was reading through the data, she developed some ideas which she thought might enhance the meaning of the data and jotted them down.
- Phase Two: Once she became familiar with the data, she then started to generate some initial codes. To generate the codes, she categorised some segments of the data that relates directly with the research questions and left those that are not related to the questions. Data segments that relates to research questions were then organised and grouped according to the research questions posed.
- Phase Three: She then began to develop some themes out of the coded data segments by closely examining these segments. Eventually this process led to the development of twelve themes.
- Phase Four: The themes that were developed in terms of the above phase were then reviewed to determine if they were making sense and if they merged with the data extracts. During this process, some themes were divided into subthemes, others were collapsed and others simply merged together. A total of nine themes and 13 subthemes which became the final themes and subthemes was eventually generated through this exercise (See Chapter Three Section 3.3).
- Phase Five: during this phase, the researcher wanted to identify the essence of each theme and their respective subthemes. She did so by reading through the data segments under each theme in order to have a full understanding of the underlying meanings while being mindful of the themes and subthemes.
- Phase Six: Once the themes as clearly defined and the underlying meanings of the themes are clearly noted, the researcher began the process of writing-up the analysis report, which is presented as Chapter Three of this report.

It is crucial to note that the process of data collection, data analysis and the entire research process, was characterised by some strategies of quality assurance as demonstrated in the next section.

#### **2.6.6. The process followed in verifying the data**

Unlike in quantitative research where quality is proven through reliability and validity, the quality of qualitative research is determined through trustworthiness of the study (Morse et al. (2002:14). Bowen (2009:4) defines trustworthiness as concrete base upon which the credibility of a qualitative study will be judged. Denzin and Lincoln in (Bowen 2009:4) suggest four factors to be considered in establishing the trustworthiness of research findings from qualitative research, this factors includes credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability. And a detailed description of this factors and how they were applied is outlined next.

##### *2.6.6.1 Ensuring credibility of the study*

Credibility of a study can be achieved through different strategies to enhance the researcher's ability to assess the accuracy of the findings and convince the reader of the accuracy of the findings, (Guba & Lincoln 2000 (in Creswell 2009:191 & Babbie et al. 2011:277). Credibility is about the assurance that the researcher have in the research findings and it also determines and ensures that the information provided is a true reflection of what happened between the researcher and participants, (Anney, 2014:05). The next section presents the strategies for ensuring credibility.

- *Triangulating the data, the researcher and the methods*

Triangulation involves gathering information using different sources and methods to enhance the credibility of the study, (Leedy and Ormrod 2016:278, Wagner 2012:138), cites that one of the common ways of ensuring triangulation is by combing observation and interviews. Anney (2014:5) cites that triangulation involves the researcher employing different and multiple sources to obtain corresponding information, this is also cited by

(Bowen 2009:4) who explains that triangulation helps the researcher to be confident of the research results by using different sources like interviews and observations of participants. Three triangulation techniques are outlined below (Anney 2014:5).

- ✓ Investigator triangulation: a form of triangulation that uses multiple researchers to investigate the same problem, bringing different modes of inquiry and helps strengthening the integrity of the study.
- ✓ Data triangulation: uses different sources of data or research instruments, such as interviews, focus group discussion or participant observation, or that utilizes different informants to enhance the quality of the data from different source.
- ✓ Methodological triangulation was used for different research methods.

In the current study the researcher could not employ investigator triangulation because investigator triangulation expects the researcher to employ or have other researcher conducting the same study, and the process could not be practical and possible due to time and financial constraints. Methodological triangulation used as the researcher used face to face interviews to gather information. During the interviews the researcher observed participants and their surroundings. The data triangulation was implement by means of interviewing thirteen participants who individually and in their unique ways, narrated their experiences, challenges and coping strategies in different ways.

#### ✓ *Performing member checks*

Member checking may take a form of the researcher consulting the participants to verify the correctness of collected data (Wagner 2012:138). Babbie et al. (2011:277)states that the researchers can consult the participants to verify the data and interpretation in order to correct any mistakes made during the interview and to allow participants an opportunity to provide any additional information if there is any. In ensuring that the data collected by the researcher is a true reflection of what happened during the interviews, the researcher



asked the participants to verify whether the gathered and transcribed information is correct and a true reflection of their experiences as narrated during the data collection. Mogokgomeng and Mohloko requested the researcher to send them the transcripts via emails, after which some telephonic discussions were held with them to discuss the correctness of the data. A meeting was also held with Mmupudu and Molope to discuss the transcript and during the discussions they were both happy with the transcripts. With the rest of the participants' member checking process was face-to-face wherein the researcher visited them to have some discussions around their data. All of the participants were happy with the data as it is as well as the researcher's interpretation.

✓ *Using thick description to convey the findings*

The researcher should provide a detailed description of the events that took place during the study in order to allow the reader to follow the process (Creswell 2009:192). Babbie et al. 2011:277) state that the researcher needs to provide detailed, rich information and present it clearly so that the reader can make judgements about the study. In heeding to Babbie et al.'s suggestion, the researcher presented as much information as possible to enable the reader to closely follow the process without confusion or uncertainty. Rossman and Rallis (2012:269) note that thick description may include the details around the physical surroundings, time, place, actions, events, words, people and interactions on the scene of the study.

In the current study, thick description took four forms. Firstly the researcher thought it to be necessary to dedicate the entire chapter (Chapter One) on a detailed explanation of how the research plan which guided this study was compiled and another chapter (Chapter Two) on how the research plan was actually implemented. Secondly she ensured thick description by presenting the text in this report as detailed as she could, by among other things, using footnotes to clarify some of the concepts and by supporting her interpretation of the research findings with the extracts from the interviews. Thirdly finally, the structure of this report by itself somehow fulfils the thick description requirements in that it allows the reader to clearly follow the sequence of events with full

knowledge of how the process unfolded from conceptualisation to reporting. Finally detailed description of the study site was also provided to assist the reader in painting a picture of the Driekop as he or she reads through this report.

✓ *Analysing negative cases*

Researchers are urged not only to look for cases that are similar, they should also consider those that are contrary to the average in order to enhance the credibility of the study (Creswell 2009:193; Flick 2018:93). Some negative case analysis were conducted in the current study wherein participants like Molohe reported two conflicting statements where the participant feels good about staying in the community however as the interview continued the participant cited challenges with regard to crime especially burglary. In another instance Mohlwareng presented a totally opposing experience from those presented by other participants and these contradictions were clearly presented as they are in the findings. Similarly Mmilo expressed her challenges at the same time indicated that she has made peace with them (See Theme six).

✓ *Performing prolonged engagements*

Qualitative research requires researchers to spend time in the research field in order to gather authentic and credible data (Leedy and Ormrod 2016:279; Wagner 2012:137). By spending enough time in the field, the researcher will get clear understanding of the people being studied and therefore ensure credibility, correlation or discrepancies between what the participants are saying and what she is observing (Creswell 2009:192).

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Mmilo: Pseudonym

In this study the research spent the first week in the community just to familiarise herself with the area by among others having some informal discussions with key people such as the herdsmen and other community leaders. The purpose of this exercise was just for

her to become familiar with the events, general feelings and experiences about this community. She later on spent a period of nine consecutive days from the 22<sup>nd</sup> June to 29<sup>th</sup> June 2018 collecting the data through interviews and observation. The formal interviews took a period of between thirty to forty minutes. After receiving feedback from supervisor which pointed to among other things some gaps in the data, the researcher decided to spend two more weekends (during the first and the second week of August 2018) to engage participants in trying to get more relevant information. These initiatives enabled the researcher to be more involved in the process, the participants and the research site and therefore satisfied the requirements of prolonged engagement.

✓ *Participating in peer debriefing*

Researchers can consult peers to play a devil's advocate in the study and this may be someone who understand the context of the study and who can help the researcher to review and analyse the research process (Babbie et al. 2011:276; Creswell 2009:192). According to Creswell (2009), peer debriefing involve an outsider who reviews the work of the researcher and that add credibility to the study. In the study the research kept contact with one of the peers studying towards her Social Work Doctorate through the University of South Africa, to regularly review and discuss the work of the researcher. The researcher was also in touch with the supervisor who at every step of the process, provided detailed support sometimes challenged her to fill up some gaps in the data and literature. The supervisor was also able to spot some gaps in the data and the missed probing opportunities and urged the researcher to revisit some of these participants to fill in these gaps.

✓ *Engaging in reflexivity*

Researchers need to be aware of their personal biases, assumptions and values as they affect the research process. By being explicit, the researcher will ensure that the findings are a reflection of the participants rather than her own perspectives (Gentles, Jack, Nicholas & McKibbin 2014:1; Curtin & Fossey 2007:92; Umpleby 2007:2). This means

that the researchers should identify their actions throughout the process and be able to explain how they impact on the process. The researcher needs to conduct self-reflection throughout the study and one of the valuable ways of self-reflecting is through a journal (Rennie 2004:183). In the journal the researcher keeps an ongoing record of her or his experiences, reactions, and emerging awareness of any assumptions or biases that come to the fore.

In this study, the researcher used a diary to record all the actions and events during the process and linked them to specific aspects of the process (see Addendum G). During the research process, the researcher became aware of the impact of her assumptions particularly as a woman when she became deeply immersed into the stories shared by participants like Mohlwareng wherein she was so emotionally involved in the interviews to an extent that the supervisor had to dismiss the interview as one of those wherein the researcher failed to use probing to enhance its richness. Although being a woman to the researcher had its negative effect on the study as mentioned above, it also assisted her in relating well with the participants and therefore made rapport building much easier and quicker. Each of the noticed impact of the researcher's features were noted in the journal to assist her in improving her conduct, attitudes and skills as the process develops.

#### *2.6.6.2 Ensuring transferability*

To recap on the discussion of transferability as introduced earlier in chapter one (see section 4.1.7), it worth setting a base for its implementation by defining it as a process through which the research findings are applied in to other contexts (Babbie et al. 2011:277). According to Quick and Hall (2015:131), despite the participants' experiences being specific to their social settings, they can also be applicable to the reader's own experiences and situations. It is therefore crucial to describe the process as detailed as possible to enable the reader such an opportunity of applying the participants' experiences in their own situations. In the current study, thick description was used as one of the strategies to enhance transferability. The researcher considers thick description to be a viable means to enable the reader to follow through every detail of the process in order to easily apply them in their own settings should they so wish. The

manner in which thick description was implemented in this study was clearly explained earlier in this chapter (see Section 2.6.2) and will not be repeated here. The reader will therefore find it beneficial to revisit that section.

#### *2.6.6.3 Ensuring dependability*

Qualitative study cannot be transferable and regarded as trustworthy unless it is dependable (Babbie et al. 2011:277). Qualitative researchers should prove to the reader that if the same process were to be followed, the same results from different participants would emerge (Babbie et al. 2011:278). This can be achieved if the researcher provides detailed events in terms of the process, steps and actions taken in the research design and implementation for data collection and how the plans were implemented. A detailed description of the manner in which the research plan was drafted and how the plan was implemented was clearly outlined in Chapters one and the current chapter respectively as some of the means to enhance dependability. A step-by-step process through which the qualitative research as an adopted approach for the current study was implemented, was clearly provided earlier in the current chapter (see Section 2.3 and table 2.1 in the current chapter). The researcher deliberately adopted these strategies in order to enhance dependability of the study.

#### *2.6.6.4 Ensuring Conformability*

Conformability refers to the degree to which the research findings are based on the participants' responses and not the researcher's understanding and perceptions, (Babbie et al. 2011:278). It involves the establishment of data and interpretations of the findings without figments of the researcher's imagination, but purely on the basis of the collected data. For the reader to understand the research findings and be convinced, Kalu and Bwalya (2017:8) suggest a detailed account of the research process with regard to the method of inquiry, design and their effectiveness and the evidence of a decision trail at each stage of the research process.

For the purpose of the current study, the researcher provided a detailed plan of how the study was to be conducted as planned in Chapter One, the implementation of the research as outlined in the current chapter and step by step activities of the implementation process (see section 2.3 and Table 2.1 in the current chapter). Kalu and Bwalya state that conformability is achieved through credibility, transferability and dependability. In other words, once credibility, transferability and dependability are adequately satisfied, the conformability will also be achieved. The preceding discussions from section 2.6.1 to section 2.6.3 have outlined how credibility, transferability and dependability were satisfied, which suggests that conformability has also been achieved.

## **2.7. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS AS APPLIED**

Although the definition of research ethics was provided in Chapter One (see section 1.7), it is crucial to bring the reader on board by revising the definition of research ethics as the impact of research on people involved in the study, and the steps taken by the researcher to protect them (Walliman 2016:85; Flick 2011:215). Ethical research practice is embedded in the moral guidelines and principles of respect for people (Marshall 2011:47). Within the research field, observation of the research ethics begins as soon as the researcher makes contact with the community either through participants or gatekeepers (Wagner, Kalich & Garner 2011:64). As indicated in chapter one, the researcher's initial plan was to observe informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality, debriefing and management of information and as indicated below, this plan was implemented without any amendments.

### **2.7.1. Informed Consent**

Informed consent is a process through which the researcher provides potential participants with sufficient information about the project and allowing participants opportunity to make informed decisions about whether or not to participate (Gray 2014:75). Researchers needs to provide participants with written consent forms that outlines the nature and purpose of the research and informs participants of their rights to

take part or not (David & Sutton 2011:45). Upon being granted permission to conduct the study, the researcher arranged one-on-one meetings with potential participants after the recruitment process to explain the ethical issues embedded in the study. During those meetings, she provided them with written informed consent forms as well as copies of approval letter from the UNISA's Social Work Departmental Research Committee. An informed consent form detailed information about the study and the participants' rights, and the possible risks and benefits associated with the study (see Addenda A and B for an example of the informed consent form and the details it contained). She then took time to explain the content of the form step-by-step and allowed them freedom to take the forms with home in order to go through them again at their own time.

### **2.7.2. Anonymity and Confidentiality**

Anonymity means refraining from publishing participants' personal information in the published materials and recordings, while confidentiality ensures that the names are kept secret and only known by the researchers (Sarantakos 2013:9; Bless et al. 2011:143; David & Sutton 2011:47). In ensuring anonymity and confidentiality, the researcher followed Flick's (2011:220) advice for researchers to store the data physically in a safe and locked way so that nobody who is not authorised to have access to it. Sarantakos (2013:19) share similar sentiments by suggesting that the personal details of participants should not be printed on the reports even on questionnaires and if they are visible on consent form the forms should be kept in a safe place where there is limited access.

Although confidentiality and anonymity may appear to be similar, they are different. On the one hand, confidentiality assumes that the relationship between two people, the researcher and participants should be based on a level of trust which includes ensuring that the information shared should not be disseminated without the consent (Wagner et al. 2011:70). On the other hand, anonymity is achieved by assigning symbols with which the reader cannot link or identify the participants. In protecting the personal details and identity of participants, the researcher is also protecting the wellbeing of the participants, (Babbie et al. 2011:523). For the purpose of this study, the researcher ensured that

information shared by participants is not linked to them in anyway by using pseudonyms. She also avoided sharing any information with the parties other than the supervisor who was part of the research process by virtue of his supervisory role.

### **2.7.3. Debriefing**

Research has the potential to cause psychosocial or emotional harm to the participants and it is important for the researcher to guard against such harm (Sarantakos 2013:18; Bless et al. 2011:143; David & Sutton 2011:47). Looking at the study concerned the possibility of participants reliving painful memories were likely inevitable. Felzman (2009:107) highlights that the researcher has the responsibility to create a space where participants can be debriefed in cases where sensitive information is shared and harmful to participants. As indicated in Chapter one (Section 5.3) the researcher requested a private social Worker to assist with debriefing services for participants who might need to be debriefed (see Addendum E for a confirmation of this service from the social worker).

The researcher agreed with the social worker that the sessions will be conducted in the former's office considering the issues of a conducive environment. The agreement was that participants will be referred as and when the need for debriefing arises and only two participants were eventually referred because of the researcher's suspicions that they might be overwhelmed by what they were sharing but they decided not to attend since they felt that they would manage.

### **2.7.4 Data Management**

In Chapter One (Section 1.7.4) the concept of data management was introduced. In qualitative research the researcher has the responsibility to ensure that the information gathered including the personal information and recorded data is protected from anyone who has no right to access that information (Witthaker 2012:49; Flick 2011:220). In Fox and Bayat's (2007:76) view, researchers should consider storing their data in consideration of the possibility of retrieval. In this study, this responsibility was upheld by



keeping hardcopies of the records and any recorded information in a locked cabinet in the researcher's house where she was the only person with access to it and by saving all electronic files and documents are saved in her password protected computer.

## **2.8. CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter was dedicated to explain the process which was followed in implementing the research plan as introduced in Chapter One. The necessity of an applied description of the qualitative research process was presented with the aim of justifying the significance of this chapter, followed by an explanation of how the process evolved from conceptualisation of the problem to writing-up a report. Specific attention was given to the manner in which the research design, methods and ethical principles were applied.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **THE RESEARCH FINDINGS ON THE EXPERIENCES, CHALLENGES AND COPING STRATEGIES OF WOMEN RESIDING AROUND THE MINING COMMUNITIES**

#### **3.1. INTRODUCTION**

In Chapter Two of this research report, the researcher explained how the qualitative research process was implemented. In the current chapter, the focus will be on the presentation of the research findings that emerged from the data collection and analysis. In order to give context to the research findings, the presentation of the findings begin with the demographic data of the research participants, followed by a summary of themes and subthemes that emerged from the process of data analysis. A full discussion of these themes and subthemes will then be provided in the context of existing literature to enable the reader to have a full understanding of the research findings. This discussion is provided by comparing the findings with the existing literature and within the context of the feminist approach and the coping theory, which are the adopted theoretical frameworks for this study. A chapter summary will then serve as a conclusion, paving a way for Chapter Four.

#### **3.2. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF PARTICIPANTS**

The findings of the study will be presented in two categories. Firstly the researcher will present the demographic characteristics of the participants and compare them with some of the demographics documented in the existing literature. Once the first set of findings are presented and analysed using some existing literature, she will then proceed to present the findings based on the research questions and objectives.

### 3.2.1 The demographic profiles of the participants

The social and economic factors have an impact on the role played by women in the economic world (Dinye & Erdiaw-Kwasie 2012:6). In other words, the social status of women and the socio-economic conditions in which they find themselves can either make their lives in the economic world to be easier or difficult. As researchers we do not only strive to try to understand the context of the study from the natural settings within which they are conducted, we also consider factors such as the social and cultural contexts within which the participants live their lives (Wagner 2012:126), hence this section is dedicated to the demographic profiles of the participants. In order to have a full comprehension of the participants' experiences and challenges, the researcher collected their demographic data which is presented in table 2.2 below.

**Table 3.1 The demographic profile of the research participants**

Names <sup>9</sup>	Age	Marital status	Race	Gender	Occupation	Education	Family composition	No dependants
1. Mmilo	33	Married	Black	Female	Conveyor Belt Assistant <sup>10</sup>	Grade 10	Husband, two daughters and one son	3
2. Mmupudu	48	Not married	Black	Female	Community Care giver	Grade 11	Participant and three daughters	4
3. Mogokgomen	39	Married	Black	Female	Laboratory Assistant	Grade 10	Participant, Husband, and three sons	3
4. Mogwane	36	Not married	Black	Female	Unemployed	Certificate	Participant, two sons and one daughter	3
5. Mohloko	41	Married	Black	Female	Performance Management Development Officer	Diploma in Human Resources (HR) Management	Participant, husband, a daughter and a son	2
6. Mohlwareng	47	Married	Black	Female	General Assistant	Matric	Participant, husband, two sons, a daughter, daughter in law and two grand kids	2
7. Mohlwehlwe	21	Not married	Black	Female	Environmental Health Inter	BSC (Environmental science)	Participant, father, two brothers & 2 nephews	0

<sup>9</sup>Pseudonyms have been used consistently for all participants to protect their identities as a strategy for ensuring anonymity.

<sup>10</sup>Conveyor Belt Assistant is an employee responsible to operate, maintain and service plants conveyor belts that transport material in the mine.

Names <sup>11</sup>	Age	Marital status	Race	Gender	Occupation	Education	Family composition	No dependants
8. Moilatsepe	44	Married	Black	Female	Unemployed	Matric	Participant and husband	0
9. Mokgokonkoa	50	Not married	Black	Female	Human Resource Development Officer	Diploma (Commercial practice)	Participant, two daughters and one grant child	2
10. Molope	36	Married	Black	Female	Unemployed	Grade 11	Participant, husband, two sons and one daughter	3
11. Moruleng	46	Not married	Black	Female	Social Worker	Bachelor of Social Work	Participant, two daughters, two sons and one brother	4
12. Motlouma	38	Married	Black	Female	HR Assistant	Matric	Participant, husband and three sons	3
13. Motshidi	40	Married	Black	Female	Unemployed	Matric	Participant, husband and three children	4

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<sup>11</sup>Pseudonyms have been used consistently for all participants to protect their identities as a strategy for ensuring anonymity.

Table 2.1 above revealed that 13 black women took part in this study. Of the thirteen, eight were married, one divorced and four were single (never married). In terms of the age demographics, participants' ages ranged between the categories of the 20's, the 30s, the 40s and the 50s. Within the age category of 20 there was only one participant who was 21 years old while in the age category of 30 there were five participants who were aged, 33, 39, 36, 36 and 38 respectively. There were six participants whose ages were 48, 41, 47, 44, 46 and 40. Only one participant, who was 50 years old, was classified within the 50 years age category. The presence of women in mining environment goes back to the 1900 century, though women were not allowed to work in the mines, (Benya 2017:81). Sharma (2010:204) highlighted in the Australian mining study that forty seven percent of the population were women of age fifteen and above. Dinye and Erdiaw-Kwasie (2012: 286) showed that women constitute different percentage in different mining of different communities.

As indicated in the above table, the collected demographic data also considered the occupational status of the participants. The data shows that nine participants had formal<sup>12</sup> employment, two of them were self-employed and the other two were unemployed. Nine of the participants were employed of which seven were mine workers and two were working in the Health and Welfare sector. Four of the participants were unemployed. According to Dinye and Erdiaw-Kwasie (2012: 286), women play different roles in mining industry from full scale participation in artisanal mining and performing household duties, selling food and cleaning houses. Sharma (2010: 207) in the Australian town of Queensland, showed that forty-four percent of women worked in retail, education and training, health care and social services, and food industry.

Finally attention was also given to the family composition of the participants which revealed that their families were quiet different in terms of the composition. Among the 13, 11 of them had dependents (Children) and two did not have any dependents. Of the 13 participants, four did not complete their matric<sup>13</sup>, three have completed matric, two had

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<sup>12</sup> Formal employment includes an employee working for another person or enterprise on a permanent basis

<sup>13</sup>They did not have a school leaving certificate (matric).

diplomas, the other two had degrees and one had a one year certificate. Looking into the occupational positions of the participants, two of them were working in Human resource department while others were general labours. The social and family dynamics of women in the mining community differ. Benya (2015:547), identified some of the roles played by women in the Marikana mine as that of Mistress to mineworkers while some moved to the mines to look for employment and others to join boyfriends and/or husbands and save their marriages. As noted by In (Lovell & Critchley 2010:127), families move to mining towns for employment opportunities and economic freedom. The demographic profiles presented outlined among others, the different age groups, education and employment status of women in mining communities their family compositions and dependents. In the next section, the focus will be on presentation of the themes and subthemes that emerged during the data analysis process. The data pertaining to the research questions that was collected and analysed gave rise to some themes and subthemes, which are presented in table 3.2.

**Table 3.2 Themes and subthemes**

Theme	Sub-theme
Theme 1: Participants' experiences about being residents of Driekop mining community	
Theme 2: Participants' experiences in relation to the economic benefits of being a woman residing around a mining community	<p>Subtheme 2.1: Experiences in relation to the benefits of employment opportunities.</p> <p>Subtheme 2.2: Experiences in relation to the improvement of people's livelihoods.</p> <p>Subtheme 2.3: Experiences in relation to the opportunities for self-employment.</p> <p>Subtheme 2.4: Participants' experiences in relation to the benefits of accessible workplace.</p>
Theme 3: Participants' experiences pertaining to gender stereotypes	Subtheme 3.1: Participants' experiences pertaining to the challenges of the mine's preference of men over women in terms of employment

	Subtheme 3.2: Participants' perceptions pertaining to gender stereotypes around the community and within their households
Theme 4: Participants' descriptions of the challenges associated with the mine as an enabler of social problems in the community	<p>Subtheme 4.1: Participants' descriptions of the challenges associated with the mine as an enabler of crime and violence within the community</p> <p>Subtheme 4.2: Participants' descriptions of the challenges associated with the mine as an enabler of alcohol and substances abuse within the community</p> <p>Subtheme 4.3: Participants' concerns about prostitution, adultery and sexual exploitation.</p>
Theme 5: Participants' concerns about people from outside their community as a threat to their employment opportunities	
Theme 6: Participants' challenges in relation to the mine's failure to develop the community and render services	
Theme 7: Participants' challenges in relation to lack of empowerment programmes for women	
Theme 8: Participants' concerns about the mine's inability address everybody's employment needs	
Theme 9: Participants' strategies adopted in coping with the challenges associated with being a woman residing in the mining community	<p>Subtheme 9.1: Participants seek help from neighbours and family members to cope with the challenges associated with being a woman residing in a mining community.</p> <p>Subtheme 9.2: Participants cope by keeping their faith in God and church</p> <p>Subtheme 9.3: Participants equip themselves through education in order to address their challenges</p> <p>Subtheme 9.4: Participants resort to joining community structures</p>

### 3.3 PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS AND LITERATURE CONTROL

Researchers should not only present the information as raw discussions, they should substantiate it with quotations from the data gathered, (Gray 2014:519; Straits & Singleton 2018:519). Drisco (2018:5) points that researchers should provide the reader with raw data from participants' voices by using lots of quotes from the participants. Similar sentiments are shared by Creswell and Poth (2018:219), who mentions that researchers should bring to the fore the voices of the participants and by using quotes to substantiate and bring the message to the reader. In the next section, the themes and subthemes that emerged from data analysis will be substantiated by the storylines and be compared with some existing literature from the adopted theoretical frameworks.

#### 3.3.1. Theme 1: Participants' experiences about being residents of Driekop mining community

One of the questions posed to the participants was based on their experiences as residents of Driekop mining community. Like all other responses, their responses to this question were analysed and gave rise to the theme "participants' experiences about being residents of Driekop mining community". Among the participants who shared their experiences about being a resident in this community was Mohlwareng who indicated that *"... living in a mining community is fine, because the chances of local people working are high and I am also working though it comes with its challenges. The mine has brought job opportunities in the community..."*.

On a slight contrary to Mmupudu above, Molope's experiences of the Driekop community was that the area was generally peaceful. To her Driekop was more of a peaceful community as she explained, *".... I grew up in this community and this is a small community where most people know each other and most of the time is a peaceful and quite community and is really good and easy to stay here..."*.



Like Molohe above, Motlouma described her experiences of Driekop community as tribal, and a generally quiet area. This is what she told the researcher, *“....this is a village and few things are happening except weddings and parties, but in reality the community is quite and there are no problems except the social challenges that everyone have with water and other things”*.

In another interview with Mogwane, she pointed out that *“....being a member of this community is the best thing but at the same time [it] can be a bit tricky especially when you seem like an independent thinker and not just following everyone but asking questions. I am saying this because apart from the natural environment that has changed because of the mines, the lifestyle is no longer the same. I guess the assumption since the start of the mine was that we will be employed and an improvement into the community members’ lives will emerge and even the infrastructure will be developed”*.

The points highlighted by the participants above reflect the general expectation by most of the community members who reside in the communities where there are some mine operations. The expectation is that the mine will create employment opportunity for them and transform their livelihoods to become better. The creation of employment opportunities for women such as Mohlwareng above should be understood from the mining regulatory frameworks such as the mining charter and the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act No 28 of 2002 which provides for women to be considered for employment opportunities in the mines, the same way their male counterparts are considered. The mining charter provides for ten percent employment of women in the mining sector (De Klerk Botha & Botha 2015:1), including underground employment. Mohlwareng’s experience as provided for by the mining charter also find support from the International Alliance on National Resources (2004:5) in Africa which points out that women’s participation in mining is significant as women workers provide benefits to both the mines and its workers.

Despite being provided with employment opportunities, women tend to encounter some difficulties as alluded by Moalusi and Jones (2018:7), who observed that they continue to

encounter challenges associated with motherhood impacting on their employment opportunities and promotions in the mining positions. Notwithstanding the contrasting stance taken by Molohe and Motlouma above, it is not a surprise given the revelations of literature, that in recent years most of the mining expeditions take place in rural and small-town communities where social cohesion and cultural beliefs are part of daily lives, (Mensah and Okyere 2014:66; Nguyen, Boruff, & Tonts 2018:22). This could lead to a sense of peace and unity among residents of these areas. In addition to the participants' experiences about being residents of Driekop community, participants alluded to the experiences in relation to the economic benefits of being women who reside in this community, which is a subject of discussion in the next theme.

### **3.3.2 Theme 2: Participants' experiences in relation to the economic benefits of being a woman residing around a mining community**

On the data pertaining to the experiences faced by women in the mining community, four subthemes emerged out of the process of analysis. These included the participants' experiences in relation to the benefits of employment opportunities created by the mine, the experiences in relation to the improvements of people's livelihoods because of the mine and the experiences in relation to the opportunities for self-employment brought by the mine. These subthemes are discussed further below.

#### *3.3.2.1 Subtheme 2.1: Experiences in relation to the benefits of employment opportunities*

The participants' experiences in relation to the benefits of accessible workplace opportunities created by the mine were expressed in several ways. During the interview with Mohloko, she mentioned how she came to the area in search of employment, which she eventually secured. This is what Mohloko said, *"...I came in this community looking for employment and I have also brought my family to stay with me since I started working here. And staying in a mining community has its benefits. The positive side for me was that since I came here I managed to get a job and I have could bring my family and all is well up to so far."*

In the case of Mogokgomeng, the benefits brought by the mine included the opportunity for employment and furthering her studies. This is what Mogokgomeng had to say, “...*life have been great because I am working, and I managed to improve my education*”.

In another interview, Mohlwareng explained how the mine changed her life by offering her an employment, which changed her life since she could now provide for her children. This is how she explained her experiences, “*The mine gave me an employment opportunity and since I started working I can provide for my children. With the job opportunity, my life has changed*”.

What is shared by the above participants should be considered in the context of the broader need to empower women, which is the cornerstone of the feminist theoretical stance. Breaking barriers in male dominated employment opportunities for women emancipation through legal, educational and is the core of liberal feminists and employment of women in mining community achieves exactly that (Motta, Fominaya, Eschle & Cox 2011:5). Women empowerment through education and other means such as legal interventions as described by Nienaber and Moraka (2016:146) is part of the developmental feminism which addresses women's economic challenges through the provision of education and availing economic resources to them. It should therefore not be a surprise to see this developmental feminism in action through the experiences of participants like Mogokgomeng. Unemployment and the need to provide for families as observed by Benya (2015:547) appear to be the main driver that motivates women to look for employment opportunities in the mines.

Being employed in the mine for women such as Mohlwareng means that the entire family is in a better economic condition and the needs of children are addressed. The number of women who are benefiting through employment from the mine was in 2009 and 2012 respectively, estimated to be around thirty to forty percent around the world, (Govan 2009:596; Dinye & Erdiaw-Kwasie 2012:6). Visaya-Cenisa (2015:94) mentioned that women use mining employment opportunity as a survival strategy to care for their

families. Whereas, women's participation in the mine is one of their rights to economic freedom (Lorber [sa]), the sector also benefit the entire family. According to Ackerman, Van der Waldd and Botha (2018:439), about 4.5 million dependants are supported through the mining sector and the livelihoods and income of a significant number of families depend on this sector. This evidence clearly indicates how beneficial the sector is to women as community members and their respective families.

### *3.3.2.2 Subtheme 2.2: Experiences in relation to the improvement of people's livelihoods*

As evident from the current subtheme, the mine did not only provide employment opportunities for women in the community, it also contributed towards the improvement of their livelihoods by reducing poverty. This became apparent during the interview with Moruleng, Molohe and Mohlwareng.

This is what Moruleng had to say about her experiences in relation to the benefit of poverty reduction by the mine, *".... You know what, even though the mine has brought employment opportunities, it has also come with social challenges, but overall the issue of poverty has reduced in most households"*.

In another interview, Molohe indicated that the people's livelihood changed as a result of the mine, *"The area or community before the mine started relied mostly on farming and grants to support their families but with the mine we see changes in the livelihood of most people"*.

For Mohlwareng, the mine improved the people's livelihoods by creating employment opportunities and changing their lives, *"living in a mining community is nice because it has given most people employment opportunities and people's lives have changed for the better and thanks to the mine"*.

The role of the mine in sustainable livelihood development is provided for by the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act and the Mining charter which according to

Ackerman et al. (2018:440), places pressure on the mines to act responsibly to uphold the principles of sustainable development within their operational areas. In Abrahamson et al 's (2014:8) view, the world consider social sustainable development as a process through which people's lives will be enhanced through employment creation, equal distribution of revenue, wealth and developments programmes and the employment of local people especially women within the mining industry.

As evident from the narratives of the participants, there is a general sense of gratification about the way the mine is executing its social responsibility of ensuring sustainable development of their livelihoods since they have managed to get some employment through the mine. This sense of gratification as revealed by the participants is also noted in Lahiri-Dutt and Mahy (2018:10) whose Indonesian study of the impacts of mining on women and youth revealed that mining has altered the social and economic conditions and the livelihoods of the two communities wherein the study was conducted. The social feminist intends to improve the social conditions of women while the liberal feminist ensures that laws in the social structures help solve gender inequality challenges, (Nehera 2016:10-11). The benefits of employment as perceived from the liberal feminist approach will ultimately enhance the liberation and empowerment of women.

#### *3.3.2.3 Subtheme 2.3: Experiences in relation to the opportunities for self-employment*

With the mining coming into their community, participants saw an opportunity for self-employment. This included among others the introduction of tuckshops, rooms for rentals and few other small businesses. The notion of self-employment as one of the benefits brought by the mine was highlighted by Molohe, Mogwane, Mmilo and Motshidi as provided in the following extracts.

Molohe explained how she resorted to self-employment due to the mine's inability to provide everybody with employment opportunity. This is what she said, *"The truth is that the mine cannot hire everyone, and that is why some of us look for opportunities to provide*

*for ourselves like running Spaza shops, selling food near the mine even lending people money”.*

In an interview with Mmilo, she explained that besides offering direct employment opportunities, it will also create other opportunities like tenders especially for people like her who are not in good health condition to work in the mine. She explained herself in the following manner, *“With time passing some of us will not be able to work in the mine because of experience and health conditions, I believe with the mine operations the community have the potential to provide other employment opportunities like taking part in the tender businesses and even renting rooms. And because a lot of people are working selling products is becoming financially effective and beneficial”.*

Like some of the above participants, Mogwane’s experience of self-employment opportunity created by the mines was eminent during our interview wherein she indicated that although she is unemployed she has a means of providing or making money through selling. This is what she said, *“And I am also selling Tupperware and Avon to supplement what the mine is giving me”.*

In line with the narratives of the above-quoted participants, Lahiri-Dutt (2015:10) pointed that the major benefits of mining operations are not necessarily in the direct employment by the mine itself, but in the booming economy, employment and business opportunities. The opportunity for self-employment as brought about by the mine is also highlighted by several researchers (Benya 2015:554; Abrahamsson et al 2014:19; Chimhepo [sa]) who report that unemployed women saw an opportunity in informal employment to support their families. In some instances, researchers report that the difficult or challenging circumstances in which people in the mining communities find themselves propelling them to examine and analyse their experiences and decide on the steps to be taken and manage the situations (Taylor & Stanton 2007:378). Self-employment is therefore one of the strategies considered by the people to manage the difficulties which they face within their communities.

#### 3.3.2.4 Subtheme 2.4: Participants' experiences in relation to the benefits of accessible workplace

The opportunities created by the mine in terms of employment and as an enabler for self-employment appear to have resulted in some other social benefits for women and their families. This was evident during the interview with Mogokgomeng, Mokgokonkoane and Motlouma.

This is what Mogokgomeng had to say, *“The positive thing about residing and working in the community is that is economically viable. I don’t have to spent money for travelling and accommodation in separate places, staying and working in my community really works very well for me. I am residing with my children and most of my family in the same environment and is very conducive”*.

The social benefits brought by the mine was also highlighted by Mokgokonkoane, who saw the role of the mine in bringing her family together. This is what she said, *“Is very important for every family to stay closer and together and now that I work with my husband and my kids are around I things it helps financial and social. We are able to see our kids”*. During another interview with the researcher, Mogokgomeng explained how she sees the benefit of mothering and nurturing her kids closer to her. She narrated her story in the following manner, *“It makes thing easier especially when it comes to children. Yes, there will always be challenges but now that I am closer to home, I can see my kids regularly and I know their development and challenges”*.

From the above-quoted voices of the participants, it is apparent that the presence of the mine in their community made things easier for them, particularly the proximity to their employment places. Proximity to the mine can however have some advantages as well as disadvantages. Notwithstanding the advantages highlighted by the participants, some studies report some of the disadvantages associated with proximity to the mines. Lahiri-Dutt and Mahy (2018 ([sa]) for instance found from their Indonesian study of the impacts of mining on women and youth that as much as the mine provided women with

opportunities for employment, women were threatened by proximity to the mine because of their experiences of noise, vibrations and gigantic machines that were seen moving around the area, sparking fear and insecurity among them.

### **3.3.3 Theme 3: Participants' experiences pertaining to gender stereotypes**

Flowing from the process of analysis, the researcher clustered the data relating to the theme “participants' experiences pertaining to gender stereotypes”, which they somehow believed was exacerbated by the presence of the mine in their community. This theme was further analysed and gave rise to two subthemes, which are firstly the mine's preference of men and the participants' perceptions pertaining to the gender stereotypes around their community and within their households. Further details around these subthemes are provided below.

#### *3.3.3.1 Subtheme 3.1: Participants' experiences pertaining to the mine's preference of men over women in terms of employment*

Participants alluded to the way they felt discriminated by the mine, which, in its recruitment process, preferred male applicants over females. This emerged during the interview with, Mogwane and Mohloko. In describing this predicament, Mogwane expressed her disappointment by saying, “...*I/we have to deal with is the limitations of the mine because the mine only hires twenty percent of women which most people are not aware and that brings in the issue of knowledge/experience, skills and education into effect because now the competition increases in that I do not have anything above matric in the soft skills....*”.

In sharing similar disappointments, Mohloko expressed herself by saying, “*Is like I am treated as second hand as compared to men. For example, there are certain jobs especially underground that pays more than administrative job and I tried to apply and I was never shortlisted and the panel sided experience but my mind tells me is because I am a woman and very few women are driving underground, and is really sad that gender programmes are only on paper but none in practical*”.



For Motlouma, the disappointments lied in the fact that few women were actually benefiting as opposed to their male counterparts. This is what she said, *“...I am a bit disappointed because very few people are benefitting especially women from this community....”*

In the case of Mmilo, she fully understood that for her to get employment she might need some higher level of education, which she acknowledged that she did not have. However, she expressed a concern about the manner in which she was struggling to get an opportunity as opposed to her male counterparts, *“...I understand that I am not educated, and I have never really worked in a mining industry but the way I struggled to get an opportunity was just too difficult as compared to our male counter parts. Sometimes even being employed in the contracts or on a contract basis was a challenge....”*.

The discriminatory practices do not only end during the phase of recruitment where male applicants are preferred over the female ones. According to the participants, these practices continue into the mine wherein females who get employed are further subjected to discrimination and gender stereotypes.

Mohloko alluded to her experience as an employee by saying, *“Is like I am treated as second hand as compared to men, for example there are certain jobs especially underground that pays more than administrative job and I tried to apply and I was never shortlisted and the panel sided experience but my mind tells me is because I am a woman and very few women are driving underground, and is really sad that gender programmes are only on paper but none in practical”*.

Mohlwareng share that the challenge of having to compete with experienced miners, *“They affect women because we have to compete with them and most of us does not have education and experience and as such I find myself being challenged”*.

Male's resistance to women in mining and organisational practices that maintain gender discrimination perpetuate the unfavourable practices against women in the mining industry and the entire community (Martin & Barnard 2013:5; Moraka & Van Rensburg 2015:7). Women's participation in the large-scale mining sector is low, whilst in the artisanal and small-scale mining sector women's participation may be greater but they often occupy risky and low value roles (Smith 2017:16). Formal jobs as observed by Smith (2017:16), goes to men because of the lower levels of education and some gender stereotypes which are driven by socio-cultural factors. Among the many challenges faced by women as noted by Smith (2017:30) are those that reflect the broader socio-cultural gender-based discrimination, barriers to entry and high levels of gender-based disparities. Gender stereotypes in mining has been alluded to by authors like De Klerk et al. (2015:202) who states that regardless of the South African mining charter's expectations to have 10% of women in the mining industry, women still face discrimination during recruitment processes.

The ill-treatment of women is also confirmed by Moalusi and Jones (2018:11) who describe the South African situation as characterised by an increase in the percentage of women employed in the mining industry, yet still experience challenges regarding work, organisational structures and recruitment processes. This challenge is also stated by Lehohla (2017:12) who states that mines still prefer men over women regardless of the targets set by chamber of mines. Women reported that they go through rigorous recruitment practices and skills audit like having matric certificates while their male counterparts can use experience as a requirement and not qualifications (Benya 2009:52). In De Klerk et al.'s (2015:205) view, the physical demand of certain jobs eliminate the prospects of women employment in the mine, as the mine may regard the employment of women as counter productive and causing injury.

### *3.3.3.2 Subtheme 3.2: Participants' perceptions pertaining to gender stereotypes around the community and within their household*

Women are not only facing challenges at work but also in their homes or households and the communities. This emerged during the interviews with Mohlwareng, Mokgokonkoane and Moilatsepe.

Mohlwareng explained her experiences in relation to the challenges of gender inequality and discriminatory practices from the community and from her own husband, *"... Women face challenges in both the mine and outside of the mine. One of the challenges women face in the community are patriarchal by nature in that there are women whom their husbands does not want them to work in the mines even though the mines is one of the providers of employment opportunities in the area. Even me, my husband did not want me to work and I sometimes feel like he is jealous of me."*

In Moilatsepe's case, her family took an issue with her participation in the community forums, which are aimed at lobbying the mine to employ people from the neighbourhood. She explained her predicament, *"Taking part in the community forums kind of opened my eyes around mining processes even though to a certain extent it impacted on my family. Because my husband and in laws are against me taking part in the forum because I am a woman and my family seem to think that I don't need a job and taking part in the community forums is for people who need employment and to a certain extent I feel like my being as a woman is not important to my family. And this was also indicated by Molohe who said that:" the family turmoil that came with her participating in the community forum and the reasoning behind"*.

Motlouma also highlighted the gender stereotypical practices that she experienced from her husband, *"the other challenge about rural communities is the ideology around men and woman. Let me put it this way; (laughing); as a woman, I am expected to earn less than my husband and for example with my situation is not happening because I started working in the mine before my husband, and that means my salary is more than his"*

*considering the work I am doing and that has cause challenges in my household because whatever I do he refers to the salary as the issue”.*

In Mohlwareng’s case, it became eminent that some women are forbidden from working in the mines despite the mine being the only source of employment for them. This is what she said, *“One of the challenges women face in the community are patriarchal by nature in that there are women whom their husbands do not want them to work in the mines even though the mines is one of the providers of employment opportunities in the area. Even me, my husband did not want me to work and I sometimes feel like he is jealous of me”.*

Moilatsepe appeared to have been clearly frustrated by the gender stereotypical practices that she was confronted with from both the mine as an employer and from her husband. She explained her frustrations in this fashion, *“And it makes things worse when one has to go home and find the same treatment because my family do not see the need for me to be developed and empowered. I understand that my husband can provide for the both of us and just because I don’t have children it does not mean I cannot have or do not deserve something for myself more than marriage”.*

Although Molohe did not see the need to work in the mine, the gender stereotypical treatment that she received from her in-laws and her husband compelled her to change her mind and reconsider her stance. She narrated her tale by saying, *“Somehow, I feel like when you are just a housewife, people don’t respect you at all. The treatment I got from my in laws and my husband when I was not doing anything was disrespectful, controlling and hurtful but since I started doing something and not depending heavily or begging him for everything things have changed. And somehow it makes me feel like as a couple or couples needs some development or space where we can just talk about marriages, challenges and everything else in relationship.*

The utterances made by the participants show that women face challenges in both the community from within the mine and their own households (Lozeva & Marinova 2010:8). The dilemma that women face are exaggerated by the mine's inability to include or involve women in the discussions leading to the establishment of the mines as part of the stakeholders while their male counterparts are involved and even receive subsidies from mines (Lahiri-Dutt 2012:10; Lozeva & Marinova 2010:7). According to Chisale (2015:8), African and Chinese idioms encourage women to prioritise marriage more than careers which can also be seen from the narratives of participants like Molohe in the current study whose in-laws find it difficult to accept her involvement in community forums that aimed at addressing the mining interests of the community. Similar kind of experience was reported by Dinye and Erdiaw-Kwasie (2012:290) who found in a study of gender and labour force inequality in small-scale gold mining in Ghana, that as opposed to their single counterparts, married women 's roles or careers were determined by their husbands.

Some evidence suggest that women living in rural areas are vulnerable to abuse, domestic violence and other social challenges (Lockie 2011:3).The challenges reported by women in this context can be clearly understood from the cultural feminist approach which points to the fact that the course of women challenges is not femininity but a value that patriarchy attaches to the qualities of women (Pasque & Wimmer 2010:17). This practice unfortunately exists in most of the areas wherein women find themselves.

#### **3.3.4 Theme 4: Participants' descriptions of the challenges associated with the mine as an enabler of social problems in the community**

The mining operations and activities do not only bring direct formal employment and opportunities for small and medium enterprises. As revealed by the participants' narratives, they appear to have also let to social degradation among community members. The focus of the current theme is to present the participants' descriptions around their views and experiences of the mine as an enabler of social problems. The theme is categorised into three subthemes, which are introduced below.

#### *3.3.4.1 Subtheme 4.1: Participants' descriptions of the challenges associated with the mine as an enabler of crime and violence within the community*

Mining operations have the potential to bring some kinds of crime and violence that negatively impact on women in one way or the other. This was among the descriptions noted during the interviews as narrated by the participants in relation to crime and violence as some of the challenges, which they believe, was enabled by the mine.

In alluding to this fate, Mohlwareng expressed her discomfort about violence which erupted from the community in reaction to the community trust created by the mine. She explained herself in this way, Mohlwehlwe cited that: *“My discomfort in the community started when community started fighting over control of the community leadership in relation to the mine and community trusts, because instead of that bringing the community together it actually brought violence and mistrust among community members. When all this thing where happening regardless of who was wrong, my family house was destroyed. Mohlwehlwe further cited that crime affect her because currently she is homeless because of the crime level in the community”*.

Mogokgomeng mentioned that though the mine has provided them with employment, it also resulted in several challenges like crime *“there are several challenges like crime. The mine has brought work but also an increase in house robbery, especially when people know that you are staying alone with the kids and during the day there is no one in the house and I have been a victim of crime I become worried especially”*.

She further explained how crime affects her personally, *“Crime affect me in different ways, like financially because I have to find someone to take care of my kids when I am not around and psychologically is challenging because I am always worried about the wellbeing of my children and family...”*

Mogwane also shared her concern about how young people turn to criminality, triggering fear among members of the community. This is how she narrated her concern, *“.... I am concerned It is worry some that young people, from our community take part in criminal*

*activities because I can say at least in each family there is one person working but as peaceful as our community used to be it is no longer the same instead the community is scary with violent activities every now and then”.*

The violence and crime in the community appears to have sparked some fear on some migrant workers who are employed in the mine. Their fears appear to have particularly been sparked by the fact that some of the local residents of the community are themselves unemployed and are therefore taking offence to the fact that they came from outside the community and benefitted from the mine. This emerged during the interview with Mmilo, who explained her fears by saying...*“You see, this community has a number of people unemployed and sometimes coming from another area, employed and staying in the community might be accepted by some but is not always the case with everyone, and I am saying this because often I find myself being victimised by thugs because I am not originally from here. My houses have been targeted and though I don’t want to point fingers, but I feel like sometimes some of the incidents are because of my background even though people may not say so on my face”.*

In the case of Mokgokonkoane, she found a difficulty in interacting with members of the community. As an outsider, she was threatened by violence. She expressed her predicament by saying, *“Sometimes as a migrant worker is difficult to interact with the community without feeling a bit discriminated or called names, even though some do not mean any harm, but you get the feeling that not everyone accepts you. I remember when the community riots started, though people were talking under general, there were questions about how I was appointed while there were women in the community that were not employed, and they even started calling names about where I came from, and it was not a nice situation because I was always on the edge wondering what would happen next”.*

Unlike Mmilo and Mokgokonkoane above, Motlouma was a local resident. Despite being a local resident, she was also afraid of being targeted by the community for holding views that are contrary to those of community leaders. *“...and the community unrest also made*

*me nervous because I felt like anyone that the community leaders is/was not happy or sure with might be attacked because it felt like they were just going after everyone they think or believe they do not agree with or have benefitted from the mine unreasonably from their point of view”.*

She further alluded to the need for intervention at the leadership level to protect the community members from violence and crime. She narrated her story in this manner, *“...personally, from the community I feel like there is a need for leadership from both the chief and community leaders to ensure that the community and individuals are protected, I am saying this because as a woman and a mine worker I no longer feel safe because of the community unrest that goes into people’s homes. I am saying this because sometime last year I was called by the police because someone tried to hang my son and thanks to a passer-by who helped him and to date the police have not arrested anyone and as a mother, I am worried for my kids and myself. I am not sure whether it was planned or just a random thing”.*

In another interview, Mohlwehlwe was clearly frustrated by the violent behaviour from some of the community members. She told the researcher that, *“The challenge is that when you reside in a community like ours or when you are dealing with a group of people, who feel entitled and deserving they don’t think that certain actions can have a negative impact on other people’s lives for a while especially the burning, looting and intimidation, it is traumatising and sad that we should solve problems by fire when there are courts to assist us”.*

Mokgokonkoane explained how she personally suffered because of criminality from the community, *“Crime is impacting on me financially because now I must have butlers and hire someone to take care of my children when I am not around”.* She further cited that: *“Crime affects everyone and there is little one can do except to increase security and report to the police and I wish the police can do something about the prostitute situation.*



From some of the participants' narratives, it became clear that burglary appears to be a common crime in the area. This sentiment was shared by Mohlwareng in this fashion, *"Burglary, I woke up one day with all windows open and televisions gone and that is a great concern."*

Molope was among those who were concerned about burglary. She alluded to her fears by saying *"Crime, burglary, whatever we can call it. I woke up one day my television, phones and car battery were gone. My biggest fear is crime"*.

In Mokgokonkoane's case, the main issue was looting. She explained how unsafe has the community become to her as a business woman due to looting, *"I am concerned about crime, because what started as community challenges have now turned into crime and looting, and as a woman, I don't feel safe around my community anymore especially at night considering the recent events. Molope also cited that as an individual there are a lot of challenges that I face, for example with the business, there is always burglary"*.

The impact of crime that happens within the mining communities is particularly eminent among women in different ways. Although the mine should be appreciated for its creation of employment opportunities for women, it also negatively affects their socio-economic conditions (Abrahamsson et al 2014:41; Lozeva and Marinova 2010:7). Ruddell et al.(in Atkinson et al, n.d:28) for example observed the relationship between crime and resources in the emerging mining communities which she believes related to the influx of single women into these communities. According to Axbard, Poulson and Tolonen (2015:6), the level of mining productivity lead to lower income opportunities for workers and the community, leading to criminal activities like burglary and robbery. Studies show that mining operations increase labour migration of single men which have the potential to increase alcohol-related offences, drug abuse, property-related crimes and domestic violence (Atkinson et al 2016:28; Lahiri-Dutt & Mahy ([sa]).Because of these crimes, women are always at the receiving end and find themselves suffering the impact of these crimes as victims.

Violence is also perpetuated by the unemployment of local community members in the local mine which often characterised by scapegoating attitudes directed to migrant workers who are blamed for stealing jobs (Mensah & Okyere 2014:82; Negi 2014:24; Mensah & Okyere 2014:84). Lack of or poor consultation of the community members by the mine and misinformation of the community members by either the mines or the community leaders is often the cause of community violence and conflicts, particularly for rewards and benefits that comes with the mining expeditions (Mensah & Okyere 2015:67), on the contrary, opposing groups often agitate against the mining operations, calling for an end to materialistic policies of local and national planning. Violence and substance abuse goes hand in hand, with substance abuse aggravating violence and violence leading to substance abuse.

#### *3.3.4.2 Subtheme 4.2: Participants' descriptions of the challenges associated with the mine as an enabler of alcohol and substance abuse within the community*

Another aspect, which came out of the analysis process, was participants' narrations about the mine as an enabler or a factor that makes it easy for alcohol and substance abuse to be common in their community. Among those who alluded to this challenge were Molohe, Mogokgomeng, Mogwane and Mmupudu.

Molohe explained how she is worried about the development of bottle stores<sup>14</sup> from the community. This is what she said in her own words, *"As a parent I am concerned about the upbringing of my children. I am around most of the time but I am worried about the number of bottle stores in the community. There is no youth programmes that can keep our kids [away] from the streets. [There are no] libraries and community centres like in cities. Seeing your eighteen-year-old child coming home drunk is not a nice thing to see..."*.

Mogokgomeng explained how she is concerned about the impact of crime and drug abuse among the youth, particularly her own children in her absence, *"With the crime rate and*

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<sup>14</sup>A bottle store is a township name commonly used to refer to a liquor store.

*drug abuse among the youth, I worry as a parent of what is happening to your children when I am not around...It affects one psychologically as a parent that my kids might find themselves involved in wrong things and that means I have to act financially and psychologically.*

Mmupudu was clearly worried about the bottle stores that could easily attract children, particularly because the community did not have recreational programmes. This is how she explained her fate, *“There are more bottle stores than schools and as a mother to girls, I am concerned because without any programmes or activities to keep our children busy they are exposed to wrong things at an early age.*

A lack of or poor social options in mining communities and high disposable income is found to be a contributing factor to alcohol abuse in the mining communities (Lovell & Critchley 2010:128). Although one could argue that substance abuse and alcohol abuse are common among the average South African communities, literature points to the extent of these problems particularly within the mining communities. In a study of Mine workers' experiences related to substance use in a zero tolerance policy context, from the Emalahleni mine workers by Barnabas (2015:22) reported that 9.3 percent of mine workers consume alcohol daily, resulting in occupational injuries. Smook, Ubbink, Ryke and Strydom (2014:1) also state that individuals residing within the ten kilometre radius to the mine are more likely to have alcoholic drinking tendencies than those who stay out of the mining community (Godfrey 2017:19). It is therefore not surprising to hear participants' concerns about their communities being characterised by substance and alcohol abuse as some of the challenges. The mining communities generally contribute to the social challenges like alcohol abuse, domestic violence and prostitution (Lahiri-Dutt & Mahy [sa]; Lozeva 2010:7).

The employment opportunities created by the mine for the residents, may also contribute to the community's social ill by disintegrating the personal and community social relations due to the impact of alcohol and substance abuse. Substance abuse might be seen as a coping mechanism for migrant miners who feel isolated from their families due to

employment. According to Baqutayan (2015:485), emotion focused coping often involves individual's engagement in some kind of behaviour in order to make themselves feel better about a particular situation. Bippus and Young (2012:179) support this view and goes as far as to highlight that some cognitive and behavioural strategies used by people to cope with stressful or emotion evoking activities and in this instance community members engage in escape avoidance to deal with the challenges experienced.

As much as it is worth celebrating the positive things created by the mine for residents, particularly women, it is noteworthy to consider the impact of the mine on the personal and community social relations, particularly the manner in which the mining work schedules and shifts operate (Lockie 2011:209) since they may also contribute to the social ills by disintegrating the personal and community social relations due to the impact of alcohol and substance abuse. Substance abuse might be seen as a coping mechanism to migrant miners who feel isolated from their families due to employment.

#### *3.3.4.3 Subtheme 4.3 Participants' concerns about prostitution, adultery and sexual exploitation*

The spread of prostitution and adultery appears to be another issue bothering the participants in this community. Those who alluded to this quandary were Mohlwareng, Moruleng, Mokgokonkoane and Molope.

In response to the challenges women are facing in the community, Mohlwareng highlighted the challenges of prostitution and adultery by saying, *"...again we have a number of people from other communities and even countries like Eastern Cape, Zimbabwe and Lesotho who work in the mines especially men and most of them did not come with their families and we know it is just a matter of time before they start engaging in relationships with locals and with the rate of unemployed women anything is possible"*.

The observations made by Mokgokonkoane is that some trucks park around the community and this to her was a concern since they attracted women to engage in

prostitution. She narrated her fate in this manner, *“And with the trucks coming in and out of the mine and some parking not far from my house they attract prostitutes and I sometimes must explain to my kids the type of work these women roaming around the trucks are doing. I am afraid of the impact on my children. I am not even sure what to think”*.

Moruleng explained how some women from the community engage in sexual relationships with migrant workers for monetary and other material benefits, *“...people come from other provinces and take jobs. Moreover, obviously, they start engaging in sexual relationship with women in the community. In addition, some of the women get into those relationships for wrong reason like hoping to get money or be supported. And some of these men sometimes just use our kids or young women for sexual pleasure and leave them with kids, and that affect mothers because when a child get pregnant as a mother you take responsibility and it is very difficult for other families as there are other families were there is no one working and you can imagine having to take care of another child and the impact there off”*.

Molope explained how she was personally affected by the issue of extramarital affairs wherein her husband got involved in a relationship with another woman, *“As a woman you go through a lot of things from children, family and even the community at large. My challenges among others include how women treat each other. Let me put it this way, one of my pain though is indirectly by my husband is also from another woman who does not respect my marriage. And that is also perpetuated by men’s ideology of entitlement in that I am a man, cheating is not an issue....”*.

The challenges raised by the participants in relation to adultery, prostitution and sexual exploitation find support in some existing literature, with authors like Kotsadam and Tolonen (2013:31) reporting that mining operations have a negative effect on sexual partners. Sex work or prostitution as noted by Lahiri-Dutt (2012:8), have been part of the mining expedition wherein single women would follow men into the mining industry. In support of this report, Benya (2015:547) highlights the role of mistresses and caregivers

in mining communities, wherein migrant workers who left their partners at home will find mistresses in the mining communities.

The presence of single men will also have the potential to increase prostitution and sexually transmitted illnesses (STIs) (Hove, Nyamunda and Mukwambo 2014:69; Abrahamsson et al 2014:14; Lozeva 2010:7; Lahiri-Dutt and Mahy [sa]). Hove (2015:69) reports that in the mining community of Chiadzwa women saw the benefits of commercial sex work as a quick and guaranteed payment as an option for economic independence rather than the mining industry. Similar findings are reported by Negi (2014:23) through a Zambian study of Solwezi town, where police reports showed an increase in what the police call “unpoliced sexualities” (Negi 2014:23). In interpreting the plight of commercial sex work in the mining communities, Mitrousi, Travlos, Koukia & Zyga (2013:132) states that one needs to consider the fact that as people we have intentions to react to a particular situation and our intentions are somehow influenced by the impact of the situation. In other words, due to the unemployment challenges, women opted for commercial sex work to survive.

### **3.3.5. Theme 5: Participants’ concerns about people from outside their community as a threat to their employment opportunities**

What emerged during the interviews was a concern by some of the participants who were the local residents about some migrant workers who came from outside the Driekop community to take their employment opportunities. What was frustrating to them was that they themselves were not employed. These utterances were eminent from participants like Mogokgomeng and Moruleng.

Mogokgomeng explained her concern about migrants who took their employment opportunities in the following manner, *“I was worried when the mine started, with the influx of men and women into our community from other communities especially other tribes that they are taking opportunities from us...With me for example when the mine started I just finished high school, no work experience and education level, and here we are the*

*mine is starting but they are bringing other tribes to work and that really made me hate them because it felt like they were coming to take opportunities from us”.*

Moruleng shared similar sentiments as she narrated how she feels migrant labourers came to take their employment opportunities, “....and the other thing that I am concerned about is the fact that people come from other areas and get employed while some of us are still waiting for an opportunity. It somehow makes me have an attitude towards the influx of people into the community weather men and women because for instance with me I have never worked in the mine, and the other challenge for me is (laughing), the high labour migration into the community because instead of community members getting opportunities people come from other provinces and take jobs”.

With fewer employment opportunities across South Africa, it is not surprising to find community members competing for few opportunities that emerge. The reaction to the so called outsiders in the manner that participants of this study did appears to be a common practice among South African communities, particularly in areas where there is development which would lead to employment opportunities. According to Axbard et al. (2015:4), migration increases competition between migrants and local community members as both parties are looking to benefit from the mine. This practice as shown by literature tends to perpetuate some hatred towards the migrant workers who are believed to take the few available employment opportunities from locals. According to Harris (2001:21) the mine also perpetuate these friction through its tendency of bringing experienced mine workers into the newly established mines resulting in diminished prospects of employment for local women.

Marginalisation of local people was also seen as a challenge in the Zambian Boma mining community, where local people were side-lined by the mine because of their lack of experience and skills (Ruddell, Jayasundara, Mayzer and Heitkamp 2017:17). Resulting from this marginalisation, it is mostly women who suffer the impact. Taylor and Stanton (2009:381) allude to the fact that an individual ‘s personal mastery that they can influence a particular decision will influence their behaviour, communities by engaging in revolts

against the mine is a way of hoping that they can influence the mine's decision in terms of employment opportunities for local people. By engaging in such activities Baqutayan (2015:485) believes participants are employing both emotion and problem solving approaches to manage the situation. With fewer employment opportunities across South Africa, it is not surprising to find community members competing for the few opportunities that emerge. Community members resorted to violence when dealing with the outsiders as a result of the fact they believed that outsiders came to take their employment opportunities. This appears to be a common practice among South African communities, particularly in areas where there is development which could lead to employment opportunities.

According to Axbard et al. (2015:4), migration increases the competition between the migrants and the local community members as both parties are looking to benefit from the mine. This practice as shown by literature tends to perpetuate some hatred towards the migrant workers who are believed to take the few available employment opportunities from the locals. Marginalisation of local people in favour of migrant workers was also seen as a challenge in the Zambian Boma mining community where locals were side-lined by the mine because of their lack of experience and skills (Ruddell et al., 2017:17).

It is mostly women who suffer from the marginalisation's impacts. Taylor and Stanton (2009:381) allude to the fact that an individual's personal mastery can influence a particular decision. Communities engaged in revolts against the mine because they hoped that they could influence the mine's decision to employ local people. By engaging in such activities, Baqutayan (2015:485) believes that the participants are employing both emotion and problem solving approaches to manage the situation. Their behaviour is therefore a reflection of the coping theory in both the emotion and problem coping style.



### **3.3.6 Theme 6: Participants' challenges in relation to the mine's failure to develop the community and render services**

Despite the presence of a mine in the community, participants reported that the area is underdeveloped. This appeared to be a concern to participants who reside in this area particularly because the mining operations have various structural impacts on the area. In supporting this theme, extracts from the interviews conducted with Mohlwehlwe, Mohlwareng, and Mokgokonkoane are provided below and discussed further in the context of literature.

This is what Mohlwareng had to say in highlighting her concern about the mine's failure to develop the community, *"...the other challenge that seems not to be resolved is the infrastructure. Yes, the mine has brought us jobs, but I think is also important that they ensure that the communities in which they operate should benefit from the fruits of their soil. The mine has been operating for over fifteen years, but we still don't have water. The roads are a mess and when is raining is difficult to move around and yet there is nothing I can point"*.

Mohlwehlwe narrated her concern by saying, *"...I believe that the mine was supposed to be assisting the community with certain things especially the basic infrastructure services like water and roads construction. How is it possible that the mine can excavate our mineral resources without planting into the social wellbeing of the surrounding community, and the roads are terrible during the rainy season and yet the mine erected the road to its plants...."*

The observation made by Mokgokonkoane in relation to lack of development was based on water shortages and bad road condition. She explained her concern in this fashion, *"... Yes, I understood that this is a rural area or community but having water for anyone, especially clean running water is a need that everyone should not struggle to have but here I am having to struggle with water, and again, the roads are bad, and worse during summer or rainy seasons..."*

Although Mmilo shared similar sentiments with Mokgokonkoane with regard to lack of water and road infrastructure, she eventually made peace with it. This is how she shared her story, *“...And it was not easy adjusting to the environment especially with the infrastructure especially the muddy roads during summer and the water shortages but I got used it too”*.

Mokgokonkoane who also shared the same concern with the above quoted participants with regard to the mine’s failure to develop the community, further explained, *“I came into this community because my husband was working here. Yes, I understood that this is a rural area or community but having water for anyone, especially clean running water is a need that everyone should not struggle to have but here I am having to struggle with water, and again, the roads are bad and worse during summer or rainy seasons. Honestly, I believe the mine only care about making profit and nothing about the wellbeing of this community, you can imagine as an employee, after work I have to struggle with water while the mine I am slaving for a kilometre away has running water and I don’t have is a bit, I don’t know what to say, but is sad really”*.

Mogokgomeng explained how underdevelopment affects her personally as a woman, *“...My house is closer to the road and on the other side is the mine dust, as you can see, whether you cleaned or not the difference is very little. We need roads and we need proper water systems that can benefit us all. And as a mine employee I find myself conflicted because you can imagine after work and having to deal with water shortages is challenging, and it also have financial implications because I have to buy water especially if whoever pump water for us did it while I am at work. Just like other participants, Mogwane’s concern was on water shortages and poor road conditions, “....There is no proper water system, our roads are in a bad condition and you cannot really pinpoint anything as a result of the mine outreach programme”*.

Motlouma expressed her feelings about the lack of services by saying, *“I feel like the mine and the municipality are failing us as, I feel like the mine and the municipality are failing us as a community. And it goes beyond water shortage especially when one has to spend*

*the money she doesn't have to buy water something that I feel the mine could have started with when they started operations in the community".*

Motshidi also shared her frustration with the challenges regarding lack of development and services by pointing that, *"For a start, one we don't have water, we are struggling with water, we are forced to buy water because the current system is not working. The government put in pipes three years back and nothing has happened since then. Is very interesting how we stay in a platinum and chrome rich mining community yet we do not have the basics, water. And the worse thing is that my husband and I tried drilling a water bore hole, but the driller could not find water and they sided that the mining expedition might be the cause. And if you are not able to do get water from the local water system during the opening time as they have allocated times to distribute water to different areas at different times it means you have to buy water with the money that you don't have.*

Mohlwareng explained the plight of women in Driekop community by saying, *"....looking at community life women including me still have to push wheelbarrows fetching water from other families that have boreholes because we do not have running water regardless of having the mines at our footsteps, and without water it becomes difficult especially for those who wish to start income generating programmes like farming and also having rooms to rent because tenants wants to have basic services like roads, water and electricity that we don't have".*

As alluded to by the participants, it appears to be a general trend for mining communities to be underdeveloped. This is notwithstanding the mining industries being one of the strategic sources of the country's economy. This observation has been made by authors like Naumann and Griener (2016:8), who report that development in the mining communities is very slow. This is despite the social responsibilities assigned to the mines to contribute to the livelihoods of the communities in which they operate by developing them (Msweli 2014:33). The mining operations as noted by Atkinson et al ([sa]), not only see the influx of people in this communities but also impact on the livelihoods, services and housing of the communities, making it difficult for the mine and government to provide

services. In some instances, it appears that when coming to development, the communities are simply ignored by the mines. Benya (2015:51) for instance indicated that in the residential community of Marikana in South Africa, there is little or no development while routes leading to the mine are tarred and others paved. In most of instances it is women who find themselves at the receiving end and having to collect water a distance away from their homes while being unable to access other services such as the clinics.

Although authors like Muntingh (2011:31) stated that mines do provide the key infrastructure such as roads, clinics, water and electricity, this was not the case in communities such as Matelo and Kalumba in Zambia which were characterised by poor economic infrastructure, lack of water, sanitation and some economic activities as indicated by Kapesa, Mwitwa, Chikumbi (2016:48). The participants' concerns about the underdevelopment are not surprising. It finds support in the works of authors like Abrahamsson et al. (2014:8) who noted that one of the mining challenges is that of ensuring a sustainable contribution to the social life and infrastructure of mining communities. The isolation and lack of development in rural mining communities finds support from black feminism which highlights that black female transformation should involve taking into account historical institutional domination by addressing individual consciousness and social transformation of the political and economic institutions as the essential for social change (Lay & Daley 2007:51). In other words, a genuine liberation of women is one that includes the improvement of their social, political and economic conditions. For women emancipation in this communities Lahirri-Dutt (2015:530) points out that social impact assessment studies in mining companies can lead to the development and sustainable and improved livelihood of mining communities.

### **3.3.7 Theme 7: Participants' challenges in relation to lack of empowerment programmes for women**

Another challenge raised by the participants related to a lack of empowerment programmes for women. They generally felt that it could be essential for the mine and government to support women in one way or another so that they can have means to

survive in this community. The storylines supporting this theme were extracted from the interviews conducted with Moilatsepe, Mohlwareng, Mogwane, Moruleng and Mohlwehlwe.

Moilatsepe shared her side of the story pertaining to women empowerment programmes by saying, *“I just wish that the mine could assist women in the community because some of us with age and lack of experience in the mining industry the chances of being employed get slimmer as the days goes by. And I just wish that there could be programmes that accommodate those who cannot be employed in the mine with income generating programmes, because the mine cannot employ everyone”*.

Unlike other participants who directed their plight only to the mine, Mohlwareng thought the government should also have a role to play. She explained her fate by saying, *“... if government and/or the mine could provide women with opportunities especially those who cannot work in the mines be empowered and funded to start their own businesses it would make a huge difference in so many people’s lives”*.

Despite their significance, women occupying roles not directly related to mineral production have received minimal attention by researchers, development programmes and governments. In addition to their contribution to productivity, women in artisanal mining communities are critical to community stability, cohesiveness, morale and general wellbeing, and act as primary agents in facilitating positive change

Mmilo shared her views by saying, *I have only been working for a year and I am grateful, but I know for a fact that I don’t want to work underground for the rest of my life. In addition, I just wish the mine and the government can have programmes to [develop] skills [for] women and I would take part.*

In Mogwane’s view, empowerment programmes for women should be more business oriented, *“And I think there is still a lot to be done for women with development or empowerment business wise because the mine will not be able to employ all of us”*.

Moruleng highlighted the significance of making funding for women projects. This is what she said, *“I wish that there was something more to provide apart from working in the mine like maybe funding to start income generating programmes that would further make difference in those who cannot work in the mines. Like me, I don’t really want to work in the mine especially underground but I believe if there was support and opportunity for projects I would benefit and don’t have to look for jobs anymore. We grew up farming and I wouldn’t mind the government and mines helping to resuscitate such projects”*.

The role of women as alluded to by Mohlwehlwe is very critical in developing Driekop community. This is what she called for, *“Our community is in crisis and I think as women we need to come together and build our community in all spheres. But for that to happen we also needs collaboration from different stakeholders especially the social development and the mine”*.

The inability of stakeholder to give attention and development to women is also confirmed by Hinton, Vega and Beinhof (2003:8) who state that the significance of women in mining communities goes unnoticed regardless of the roles they play. The lack of organisational support, institutional capacity, competition of power and power leadership as highlighted by Intergovernmental Forum of mining, minerals, metal and sustainable Development (2018:4) support the fact that women still face different challenges in the mining industry and communities and depriving them opportunity for growth. However a study by Java and Siop (2010:10) in Papua New Guinea acknowledges the challenges that prevents women development and a plan has been made to address challenges that prevent women development including train the trainer and small scale miner’s training which are aimed at empowering the women. Ahikire (s.a: 15) point that the struggle of women at local, national and international levels pushes the social boundaries wherein gender equality is seen as a challenge to the social laws and the placement of patriarchal laws and norms on women, causing them more stress in both workplace and households.

### **3.3.8 Theme 8: Participants' concerns about the mine's inability to address everybody's employment needs**

The mining expeditions seem to have brought hopes of employment opportunities among members of this community who clearly became disappointed when it fails to employ everybody. These were some of the stories told by the participants in responding to a question around the challenges associated with being women who reside in the mining community. In supporting this theme, quotations from the interviews conducted with Mogwane, Moilatsepe, Molohe, and Motshidi, are provided and discussed in the context of literature and the theoretical framework adopted.

Mogwane shared her disappointments in the following manner, *"I love my community, but I feel like when the mine started my concentration like most people was on the mine and getting employment opportunities, and now I feel like I neglected some of the basic skills that would be assisting me."*

Moilatsepe also shared the challenges pertaining to employment opportunities, *"Job, like most people I have been looking for an opportunity to work somewhere in the mine but nothing has materialised and even the forum has not assisted at all"*.

Molohe clearly understood that the mine cannot hire everyone and as such wished there were alternative opportunities. She explained this in her own words, *"The truth is that the mine cannot hire everyone, and that is why some of us look for opportunities to provide for ourselves like running Spaza shops, selling food near the mine even lending people money. For me residing next to the mine to a certain extent is working for me and that do"*.

A concern about the unemployment of local people in the mining industry within their communities finds support from a Zambian study of the social conflicts in the context of the development of new mining concessions by Kapesa et al. (2016:50) who found in Matelo and Matumba regions that community member's feel entitled to available

employment opportunities. Hove et al. (2014:71) point to the fact that the brutal operations of government militants in the Chiadzwa community not only misplaced people but people, disposed them of their income generating farms, not allowed to participate in any income generating activities near the mine and left vulnerable. To address the challenges faced by women developmental feminists believe that economic resources should be controlled to address the exploitation of women (Nienaber & Moraka 2016:147). Women as observed by Lorber ([sa]), should not only control production but take control of the management system of their businesses.

Unemployment of women in mining industry is real and factors such as consultation, recruitment practices and educational levels are among other factors that contribute to lack of employment faced by members of these communities. The mining company practices during consultation<sup>15</sup>with the communities and recruitment practices often leaves women and their inputs behind, thus impacting negatively on their career prospects in the mining industry (Lozeva 2010:6).

### **3.3.9 Theme 9: Participants' strategies adopted in coping with the challenges associated with being a woman residing in the mining community**

One of the questions posed to the participants entered around the strategies, which they adopt in managing their challenges. The responses to this question were analysed and gave rise to the theme, "participants' strategies adopted in coping with the challenges associated with being a women in the mining community". The theme was further filtered and generated four subthemes, which are further introduced below.

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<sup>15</sup>Consultation refers to a discussion between people or groups before they make a decision



*3.3.9.1 Subtheme 9.1: Participants seek help from neighbours and family members to cope with the challenges associated with being a woman residing in a mining community*

In some instances, participants reported that they resort to their neighbours and family members for support to cope with the challenges associated with being a woman residing in a mining community. Amongst the participants who shared their sentiments in relation to this subtheme were Mmilo, Mokgokonkoane, Moruleng and Mogokgomeng

In response to the question of the coping mechanism employed to manage daily challenges Mmilo explained how her neighbours and family members assist her, *“Sometimes you have to depend on other people especially with the water crises, if someone decide to pump you request neighbours to fill in your tanks and sometimes your children are forced to grow and as young as ten pushes twenty-five litre containers. Even extended family members lay a hand where possible otherwise things will fall apart. For instance, sometimes, I do morning shifts and I have to leave as early as half-past five in the morning”*.

In the case of Moruleng, confiding to someone closer to her has been helpful, *“And sometimes there is a lady that I regard as my sister and I share most of my problems with her and I find it helpful”*.

In Mohlwehlwe’s case, her mom’s sister and her cousin were instrumental source of support, *“.... My mom ‘s sisters and my cousin seem to be the pillar, because we know that whenever things happen we can go there and sometimes just talking to them makes it easier”*.

Like Mohlwehlwe Mmilo indicated that she seeks support from family members, *“Sometimes you have to depend on other people especially with the water crises, she further cited that: “... Even extended family members lay a hand where possible otherwise things will fall apart. For instance, sometimes, I do morning shifts and I have to leave as*

*early as half-past five in the morning. So, there I always request my sister to look after my children and ensure that the house is locked after they left for school..."*

The issue of support by members of the family was also mentioned by Moilatsepe who indicated that, *"...Sometimes family and family meetings do not assist in dealing with certain challenges, even though sometimes the decisions taken are no longer yours but family and if they fail you start wondering why you accepted the family decision but that is sometimes the problem with traditional or cultural decision making"*.

Mokgokonkoane was a migrant worker in the community and she did not have any close relatives or family members from whom she can seek support. She instead resorted to colleagues for support, *"I managed because I talked to some of my colleagues and I even took some time off and I could not real talk to anyone in the workplace especially wellness people, but I talked with colleagues, my husband and some of my church members, and with time I got used to it and just let everything go"*.

In the study about women's economic empowerment, navigating enablers and constraints (Hunt & Samman 2016:12-16; Kabeer 2012:21), it is clear that women experience double burden in terms family and work responsibility and the study state that women sacrifices their employment hours to cater for their family and little is shared about women depending on family members and neighbours for support. The multi-tasking ability of women is also mentioned by Java and Siop (2010:8), however little if no information is provided in terms of women seeking support from family members and neighbours. A study of Women in mining: a challenge to occupational culture in mines in South African Mines conducted Benya (2009:140) found that women cope with their employment challenges and family life by getting support from family members. Mitrousi et al. (2013:131) points that coping is not an event or reaction to a situation but an intervention and an individual's attempts to manage a negative situation. Different strategies are employed to manage different situations experienced at different times, (Ntoumanis, Edmunds & Duda 2009:249).

### 3.3.9.2 Subtheme 9.2: Participants cope by keeping their faith in God and the church

Mohloko explained how she believed that since she was unable to do anything about her situation, God would come to her rescue, *“.... And again, one just leave everything to God because what can one do if you do not have proof of who attacked you or invaded your home”*.

Moruleng told the researcher how God will one day come to her rescue, *“..I am a praying woman and I believe with time God will respond to our prayers”*.

The case of Motshidi, taking one day at a time and having faith in the Lord was what kept her surviving, *“... so it is very difficult to really say this is how I am coping because is more like taking one day at a time and hoping that the Lord will answer my prayers one day.*

It is crucial to always find a way of coping under difficult circumstances. Jacobs and Van Niekerk (2016:2) state that lack of coping skills may affect individuals negatively. The relevance of God as a coping strategy adopted by the participants should be understood in the context of Ahmadi and Ahmadi (2017:195) that fear and powerlessness are factors that can cause people to work directly with God. This was found in the study of spirituality as a coping mechanism and healing tool for mental illness amongst cancer patients who adopted spirituality and religion as a coping mechanism. O'Donnell (2013:100) in a study about spirituality as a coping mechanism and a healing tool for mental illness and addiction found that spirituality can greatly benefit people. Lewinson and Hughes (2015:22) assert that religion and spirituality can be used as coping mechanisms as life challenges come. Although different studies highlights the use of religion there is little literature on women in mining community using religion or spirituality as a coping mechanism.

### *3.3.9.3 Subtheme 9.3: Participants' resorted to equipping themselves through education in order to address their challenges*

In some instances, participants resorted to equipping themselves with education in order to increase their chances of being employed by the mines. For those who were already employed in the mines, their hope was to improve their current positions or ranks within the mine. It was particularly the narratives from our interviews with Mmilo, Mogwane and Mogokgomeng, which gave rise to this subtheme.

Mmilo explained the need to improve her level of education in order to address the challenge of being side-lined whenever employment opportunities emerge, *"...One thing I am planning to do is to enrol and finish my high school education so that I can be able to further my studies because I don't see any other way out of this situation. It doesn't help complaining about being side-lined and not doing anything about it"*.

Mogwane believed that that equipping herself with education will enhance her employment opportunities and ultimately address and financial challenges, *"... for now, studying is one of my coping strategies and hoping that achieving or completing this course will help me solve employment possibilities and my financial challenges..."*.

Like Mogwane, Mogokgomeng also realised the significance of education and decided to improve on her educational level, *"I started studying, to improve my qualifications and complete other mining courses so that I can opportunity for something more"*.

In a study of gender, diversity and work conditions in the mining, Abrahamsson et al. (2014:19) found that there are several factors that contribute to the employment opportunities for women. An Indian study of the roles and status of women in extractive industries (Lahirri-Dutt 2007:05), found that class, race and educational level plays a role. Chisale (2015:9), points that education is the major weapon that can assist women. The cognitive motivational theory points that the assessment of the presenting situation in terms of the loss/harm, threat/challenge starts with the personal growth or mastery and there are many other factors that can be seen as the determinants (Ntoumanis,

2009:249). It is not surprising that the participants pointed to studying as a form of motivation or strategy to prepare for the future opportunities.

#### *3.3.9.4 Subtheme 9.4: Participants resort to joining community structures*

Participants believed that existing community forums could somehow exert pressure on the mine to employ them and contribute to the community in various ways. It also emerged in this subtheme that, community stokvels are also some initiatives that keep women together and enabled them to cope with various challenges associated with their area. The narratives from the interviews conducted with Mmilo, Molohe, Moilatsepe, Motshidi bears reference to support this subtheme.

This is how Mmilo explained her involvement in community forum, *“... About two to three years back I became part of the community forum which was aiming at ensuring that there is fairness in the employment opportunities in the mine...”*.

Like Mmilo, Molohe indicated that: *“... Like most women, I have joined social clubs and societies that work or help during weddings and funerals and they need money sometimes even monthly, so with the influx of people looking for accommodation it is an opportunity for business...And, I feel like when you don't attend meeting especially the new community forums, whenever there is a vacant post, you are never considered, because like me, I am not comfortable attending those meeting because sometimes it ends in violent situation, burning people's houses and people being killed and threatened”*.

In coping with the challenges associated with unemployment, Mmilo mentioned that she joined the community forum, *“... About two to three years back I became part of the community forum which was aiming at ensuring that there is fairness in the employment opportunities in the mine, but the challenge I am seeing is that on all the projects that are happening none is awarded to a woman including me, as a woman I feel undermined by my male counterparts. It is like as a woman, I am treated inferior by male peers who only see woman as being suitable for labour”*.

Moilatsepe also indicated that, “.... *Taking part in the community forums rather opened my eyes around mining processes even though to a certain extent it impacted negatively on family because they do not want me form part of the community forum. ...*”.

Motshidi explained how stokvels became her source of financial support, “*One of my survival ways is being part of the stokvels, because some I am able to borrow money and do whatever I have to do and repay the money later and others help especially at the end of the year they when we share the money we have saved*”.

The above extracts demonstrate how participants cope with their challenges by engaging in different associations. Social networks provide diverse range of support through information sharing, emotional and psycho-social support, (Sharma 2010:205). Contrary to what the current participants shared in relation to using community structures to cope, women who took part in a study of women living in the remote Australian mining community reported lack of social networks and support that let to them feeling isolated (Lovell 2010:28).

### **3.4 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

Chapter Three focused on the research findings which were in a form of the demographic profile of the research participants and the findings pertaining to the research questions, goal and objectives. The demographic profiles were presented in a summarised version through Table 3.1 and later discussed in the context of some existing literature and the adopted theoretical frameworks in order to provide a broader understanding. The findings pertaining to the research questions, goal and objectives were presented in a form of nine themes and 13 subthemes which were also presented in a summary form through Table 3.2 and discussed in the context of some literature and the adopted theoretical frameworks. The next chapter will focus on the summaries, conclusions, recommendations and limitations of the study.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **SUMMARIES, CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

In chapter one the researcher introduced the study plan by providing the background and orientation to the study, which culminated into a research problem and the rationale of the study. The research questions, goal and objectives were also introduced among others, as part of the research plan in this chapter. Chapter Two was dedicated to a step-by-step explanation of how the plan as introduced in Chapter One was implemented in order to answer the research questions and address the goal and objectives. The process which was followed in answering the research questions included the data collection process, the findings of which were presented in Chapter Three as the research findings. The current chapter is dedicated to the summaries, conclusions recommendations and limitations of the study. Its primary aim is to summarise and draw conclusions based on the general introduction, the research questions, goal, objectives, the process followed in implementing the qualitative research and the research findings. In this chapter, the researcher will also proffer some recommendations for policy development, practice, training and research purposes.

#### **4.2 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

In the following section, the researcher will present the summary and conclusions in relation to the general introduction and orientation of the study, the applied description of qualitative research approach that guided the study and the research findings.

##### **4.2.1 Summary and conclusion on the general introduction**

In presenting the general introduction and orientation of the study in Chapter One, the researcher provided the history and background of the mining industry in South Africa, and the implications of mining expeditions in Africa (Abrahamsson et al. 2014:5;Creswell

& Poth 2018:59; Harrington et al. 2004:65). The introduction also covered the general challenges and experiences of women in the mining industry, around the mining community and the cultural and patriarchal factors hindering the participation of women in the mining industry both locally and across the world (Dinye and Erdiaw-Kwasie 2012:290; Hove et al. 2013:14; Lucas and Steimel 2009:13; Neumann & Greiner 2016:16; Farrel et al 2015:1).

The discussion of the historical background of the study culminated into the research problem highlighting a gap in literature around the studies about women in mining industry and mining community from a social work disciplinary perspective (Muchadenyika 2015:2; Zungu 2012; D'Souza 2013:1) and lack of social work support services for women who reside around the mining community. This gap led to the development of the rationale of the study which was aimed at justifying its relevance (Tracey 2013:55; Maxwell 2012:24). The researcher also introduced two theories that guided the study which are the feminist approach that addresses women issues from a feminist point of view and the coping theory which explains how human beings cope with their stressors (Teater 2010:94). Following the introduction of theories, the researcher introduced the research questions, goal and objectives upon which the study was entrenched, as summarised in the next section.

#### **4.2.2 Recollecting the research questions**

The researcher posed three main questions to guide this study. The questions will now be reviewed in the current section in order to determine whether or not the researcher has, through the study, answered them. The first question was “what experiences do women who reside around Driekop mining community have in relation to being women residing in this area? Through this question, the researcher hoped to develop an insight into the experiences of women who reside around the Driekop community. In answering this question, she collected the data through the semi-structured interviews. The collected data revealed that women go through several experiences by virtue of residing around this mining community. Some of these experiences were in a form of employment



benefits, improved livelihoods, and accessibility of workplace among those who are employed around the mine. Their experiences also included what they considered discriminatory practices by the mine, which often prefers male applicants as opposed to females as well as the gender stereotypes perpetuated by the general members of the community and some of their own family members.

In the second question, the researcher wanted to understand the challenges that women encounter as residents of this community. As posed in Chapter One (Section 1.3.1), the question was as, “what challenges do women residing around Driekop mining community face? The collected data was analysed and gave rise to several answers for this question. The main challenges highlighted by the participants were that the mine was an enabler of the social problems like crime, violence, alcohol and substance abuse, which are found around the community. Migrant workers were considered to be a threat because they were threatening their prospects of employment by taking the few which were available. There were no empowerment opportunities for women and there were no employment opportunities for everyone who is eligible to work.

The third question posed to the participants related to the coping strategies adopted by these women in managing their challenges. For the purpose of recapping, the question was posed as, “what strategies do women who reside around the mining community adopt in coping with their challenges? The answers to this question was in four ways, with some women seeking help from neighbours and family members, some turning to God and the church for divine intervention and some empowering themselves through education and community structures with the hope of increasing their employment prospects.

In conclusion, the above summary shows that the researcher has through the study, managed to answer all the research questions as posed. Further evidence attesting to the fact that the research questions have been answered was in Chapter Three wherein a detailed presentation of the findings was made through an analysis of each theme and

subtheme. A summary of the research findings which is presented further below will also attest to the conclusion that the research questions have been adequately answered.

#### **4.2.3 Recollecting the research objectives**

The three main research objectives and five sub-objectives were introduced in Chapter One (Section 1.3.2). This section aims to present a summary and conclusions based on all of research objectives as introduced in the research plan (Chapter One). A summary of the research objectives are presented below:

- **To explore and describe the experiences and challenges of women who reside around the Driekop mining community;**

As indicated in Chapter Two (Section 2.5.3), the researcher spent time exploring the participants by means of interviews in relation to their experiences and challenges as women who reside around the Driekop mining community. The description of these challenges and experiences was presented as part of Chapter Three which focused on the presentations of findings on the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women living around the mining community. This chapter explained how women have both diverse and common experiences and challenges as residents of Driekop mining community, with some seeing the area as more beneficial in terms of employment opportunities among others while some believed that the community was more unsafe particularly for women.

- **To explore and describe the strategies adopted by women who reside around the Driekop mining community, in coping with their challenges**

Just like she did with the above objective, the researcher collected the data through the interviews as a means of exploring the strategies adopted by these women. The collected data was then analysed and described in Chapter Three as part of the research findings, wherein women reported various strategies which they use to cope with challenges.

in order to summary and conclusion of the sub-objectives that were formulated for this study as presented in Chapter One (Section 1.3.2) is presented below:

- ✓ *To obtain a sample of participants comprising of women who reside around Driekop mining community in South Africa's Limpopo province;*

The process which was followed in eventually conducting the interviews with the participants was presented in Chapter Two, wherein section 2.5.1 explained particularly how the researcher went through the sampling process, which eventually yielded thirteen women who were residing around the Driekop mining community.

- ✓ *To conduct semi-structured interviews aided by open ended questions contained in an interview guide with the above-obtained sample;*

Once a sample was selected in terms of the above sub-objective, the researcher prepared the participants for the study and eventually conducted the semi-structured interviews with them. The details around the manner in which the interviews were conducted were provided in Chapter Two (Section 2.5.3).

- ✓ *To sift sort and analyse the data using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six phases of data analysis;*

Through the semi-structured interviews, the researcher was able to collect the data which was then analysed using the six phases of data analysis as proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). A detailed process followed through data analysis was presented in Chapter Three (Section 2.5.5) and will not be repeated in this chapter.

- ✓ *To interpret the data and conduct literature control in order to verify the data;*

The interpretation of data and literature control was part of the presentation of the research findings wherein the findings were presented and interpreted using some existing literature and the adopted theoretical frameworks. This is a process which was

given a detailed attention in Chapter Three which was dedicated to the presentation of the research findings.

- ✓ *To draw some conclusions and extend some recommendations based on the research process, the findings and for further and future research.*

This chapter (Chapter Four) is dedicated to this sub-objective. In the preceding sections, conclusions and summaries were drawn based on the research questions and objectives. The remaining sections will address the conclusions and summaries based on the goal, the research process and the findings. Section 4.3 of the current chapter is dedicated to the recommendations.

#### **4.2.4 Summary and conclusion on the qualitative research process**

In order to achieve the research objectives and the research questions, qualitative research approach was employed because of its ability to provide a detailed understanding of human experiences (Creswell & Poth 2018:8; Marshall & Rossman 2016:2; Yin 2011:138). Qualitative research was introduced in Chapter One (Subsection 3.1) as particularly useful for studies that aim to explore the experiences of people as it happens in their own environment or community (Creswell 2014:4; Creswell & Poth 2018:45; Marshall & Rossman 2016:2; Yin 2011:138). It is particularly suitable when the researcher engages in a study where there is little known (Creswell 2018:8; Marshall & Rossman 2016:2; Richard & Morse 2013:14). A gap in literature, particularly from the social work disciplinary perspective was identified from the subject and therefore warranted an investigating using qualitative research approach.

In her investigation, the researcher maintained the holistic nature of qualitative research by paying a broader attention to the context in which the participants were living their lives, hence the adoption and application of contextual research design. Contextual research design enabled the researcher to pay attention to the participants' demographic profiles and the broader community settings in which the study was conducted (See Chapter One Section 1.1.3 and Chapter Two Section 3.2). A detailed process through

which the researcher implemented qualitative research approach was presented in Chapter Two (Section 2.3). Looking into the process that unfolded, qualitative research approach provided the researcher with an opportunity to learn and understand the experiences of participants through an explorative and descriptive research designs which both allowed the participants to express themselves freely and comprehensively while at the same time affording the researcher an opportunity to interpret the participants' stories as detailed as possible.

The semi-structured interview which was adopted for this study was found to be suitable through its ability to provide participants with time and opportunity to express themselves in their own way and pace, without feeling the pressure from the researcher. Notwithstanding the crucial role of ethics in research, the researcher also learnt that ethics play a crucial role not only in protecting the participants, but also in the establishment and maintenance of the relationship which the researcher has with participants. Participants appeared to be free and more relaxed once they became assured of their right to anonymity and confidentiality and their right to withdraw at any time of the study without incurring any obligations.

Ultimately rich data was collected, allowing for thick description of the events during the process, the experiences and challenges faced by the participants as well as the strategies adopted in coping with these challenges. The six phases of data analysis as proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006) allowed the researcher to manage huge and overwhelming volume of data and transforming it into themes and sub-themes. These phases were not only crucial for data analysis, but also kept the researcher immersed with her data and therefore making interpretation, reporting and conclusion quite easy. In conclusion and based on the above points, qualitative research was therefore a suitable approach to guide this study and should certainly be a suitable approach for studies of this nature.

#### **4.2.5 Summaries and Conclusions on the research findings**

In this section, attention is placed on the summaries and conclusions based on the research findings. The demographic profiles of the research participants will be followed by a presentation of the findings based on the research questions, goal and objectives.

- **Summary and conclusions on the demographic profiles of the participants**

Thirteen black women who were aged between 21 and 50 years participated in this study. A detailed presentation of the demographic profiles of the participants is presented in Chapter Three (Section 3.2) generally demonstrated that participants have both diverse and common features. Participants displayed diverse demographic profiles in terms of educational qualifications, marital status, occupation and family composition and common features in terms of race and gender. To conclude, women who reside in Driekop mining community are black, mostly are employed, every few of them have tertiary educational qualifications.

- **Summary and conclusions on the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women in mining communities**

The research findings presented in chapter three provided nine themes and thirteen sub-themes focusing on the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women in Driekop mining community. A summary and conclusion based on these themes and subthemes is presented in the current section.

- ✓ *Theme One: Participants' experiences about being residents of Driekop mining community.*

From the participants' experiences in relation to being residents of Driekop mining community, it became clear that some were generally happy about the community because it provided them with employment opportunities and other economic benefits (Kotsadam et al. 2016:326), while others were concerned about crime and violence which

they believed were perpetuated by the mine (Nguyen et al. 2018:11). Although the mine was reported to have economic benefits, participants expressed a concern about the exclusion of women in the negotiation of mine contracts which ultimately benefit men. In order to break the inequalities, anti-discriminatory legislations and affirmative action policies should be enforced to ensure the protection of women (Lorber (n.d:3)).

✓ *Theme Two: Participants' experiences in relation to the economic benefits of being a women residing around a mining community.*

In responding to a question of their experiences in relation to the economic benefits in residing around a mining community, participants expressed confidence in penetrating the male-dominated industry and that the benefits of employment opportunities which are extended to their entire family. Participants also expressed a sense of satisfaction in the benefits of being residents of a mining community, which they indicated it has improved their livelihoods, created employment opportunities and made it easy for them to access their workplace.

✓ *Theme Three: Participants' experiences pertaining to gender stereotypes*

From the participants' responses based on the challenges they are facing as women residing around Driekop mining community, there seem to be some stereotypes perpetuated by the mine, community members and their own families. A concern was raised by the participants about the mine's preference of men over women which they said affects their employment prospects in the mine (Botha 2016:252; Lozeva & Marinova 2010:10). The gender stereotypes and discrimination were not exclusive to South Africa. An Australian study by Sharma (2010:207) also showed that women are marginalised due to their gender, with only 13% of women employed in the Australian mining industry. These gender stereotypes appears to have been rooted in patriarchal practices which are entrenched both within the community and the participants' households, which generally considers mining to be a man's job. Beauvoir 's Existential Feminism (in Mosier-Dubinsky 2014:13) point that women are often on the receiving end, in that certain companies see

them as riskier investments and as such, deny them opportunities. This shows that regardless of policies that support women development, women continue to experience gender stereotypes in the workplace.

✓ *Theme 4: participants' description of the challenges associated with the mine as an enabler of social problems in the community*

A concern was raised by the participants about the mine as an enabler of some social problems within the community, with some believing that the mine perpetuates crime, violence, drugs and substance abuse. Adultery, prostitution and sexual exploitation were also raised as some of the problems associated with the mine. Some parts of literature supported this theme, which shows that the conflicts over land have resulted in an increase in violence (Mensah and Okyere 2014:84). Furthermore participants believe that the mining activities and the influx of men into the community brought with it, a culture of alcohol and substance abuse in the community. Researchers like Lockie (2011:210) seem to support this theme as they consider women to be at the receiving end of alcohol abuse as well as physical and psychological abuse. In dealing with specific problems, people may adopt intentional problem solving efforts to help manage the situation, (Lazarus & Folkman, cited in Baqutayan 2015:482). Problem solving maybe confrontive, seeking social support and planning full problem solving (Baqutayan 2015:482). The findings of this study reveal that participants experience social ills and the research literature has demonstrated that in order to resolve the problem, we need to confront it from various angles.

✓ *Theme Five: Participants' concerns about people from outside their community as a threat to their employment opportunities*

What was found among the challenges faced by the participants was a perception that migrant labourers will take their limited employment opportunities provided by the mine. This perception often sparked some tensions between the local residents and migrant labourers. These perceptions could have some truth elements in them given some



revelations that 82% of people working in the mine workers in Australia were migrant workers while local people constituted only 18% of the total work force, (Lozeva & Marinova 201:11; Kapesa et al. 2016:49).

✓ *Theme Six: Participants' challenges in relation to the mine's failure to develop the community and render services*

Participants felt that since the mine is extracting the minerals from the community, it must somehow develop infrastructure and provide services like water. A sense of satisfaction as reported by the participants will prevail if the mine can show a sense of caring by contributing to the improvement of the road conditions, and other infrastructure around the community. From the coping theoretical perspective, Carver (in Baqutayan 2015:482) opines that the problem focused coping involves actively coping with the challenges and planning how to manage the problem and seeking social support to remedy the situation.

✓ *Theme Seven: Participants' challenges in relation to the lack of empowerment programmes*

Participants alluded to the challenges they face as women with regard to lack of women empowerment programmes around the community, which leaves them in a disadvantage position. Women empowerment programmes will not only place women in a better position in terms of the employment opportunities, they will also empower them to take other opportunities such as the self-employment opportunities. In Communities where patriarchal family system is still valued, women have less value (Lorber n.d:13). The lack of empowerment programmes particularly from social workers and the mine attests to male dominance due to the lack of support.

- ✓ *Theme eight: Participants' concerns about the mine's inability to address everybody's employment needs.*

What emerged through this theme was that there was a general expectation for the mine to make employment opportunities for everyone who is eligible to work. The mine's inability to fulfil this expectation became a course for concern to some of the participants. Participants' expectations were not found to be exceptional to the current study. There seem to be a general expectation of this nature in some countries with studies conducted in countries like Zambia making similar revelations, (Kapesa et al 2015:42).

- ✓ *Theme nine: Participants' strategies adopted in coping with the challenges associated*

Participants' responses on the question of the strategies used in coping with their challenges varied, with some opting to seek help from their neighbours and family members while others decided to keep their faith on God and the church hoping for the better. In some instances, participants adopted self-development initiatives by furthering their studies while others decided to consolidate their lobbying efforts by participating in the community lobbying structures. Social support is helpful for coping and survival, Taylor and Stanton (2007: 381). Participants' experiences in terms of balancing work-life showed that people or individuals need support systems to survive daily activities.

A conclusion drawn from this summary is that women go through various experiences in their lives as residents of a mining community and throughout their lives they are confronted by various challenges that differ in terms of manifestation and impact. Despite the challenges faced by these women, they seem to find different ways of coping depending on the nature of the challenge, their faith and affiliation with some community structures.

### **4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the research findings and the research process, some recommendations are proposed in relation to social work practice, future research and training and development.

#### **4.3.1 Recommendations for social work practice**

The recommendations made for social workers are that they should:

- ✓ Play a liaison role between the mine and women in order to ensure that women's interests are considered whenever key decisions are made by the mine;
- ✓ Educate the community about gender stereotype and gender discrimination and their impact on women;
- ✓ Support women in developing community structures aimed at preventing crime, violence, drug and substance abuse by promoting dialogue and mutual support;
- ✓ Design and promote programmes that are aimed at enhancing solidarity and as a sense of economic independence among the women;

#### **4.3.2 Recommendations for further research**

On further research, the following recommendations are proposed:

- ✓ Further studies around the issues of women who reside around the mining communities, be conducted across the South African mining communities in order to have a full understanding of their conditions;
- ✓ Future studies around this subject should consider the views of the mine and other community members in order to have diverse sources of data which will enhance knowledge and understanding of the subject.
- ✓ Further studies around this subject should invite some suggestions by women on how their conditions could be improved.

### **4.3.3 Recommendations for training and education**

The following recommendations are proposed for training and education purposes:

- ✓ The training and education of social workers should include some topics of women and mining in their curriculum in order to equip social workers with the necessary knowledge and skills relating to the issues faced by these women.
- ✓ Some women empowerment training initiatives should be developed and implemented to empower women with knowledge and skills on economic development of women who reside around the mining communities.

## **4.4 THE LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

Limitations in terms of the data: The data was collected only amongst women who were residing around the Driekop community to analyse their experiences, challenges and coping strategies. The views of the mine, community leaders, men and other community members did not form part of the data.

Limitations on the demographic profile: Participants were all black women from Driekop community. Although their demographic profiles differ in various ways, they shared a number of features such as race, gender and geographical area which might make it difficult for generalisation of findings in a different setting.

## **4.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter was presented summaries, conclusions and limitations of the study and some recommendations for social work practice, training and education as well as for future research. The summaries and conclusions of the study were conducted by revisiting the general introduction and orientation to the study, the questions, goal and objectives of the study and the research process. The findings were also summarised theme-by-theme from which a general conclusion was drawn. The limitations of study were also highlighted to enable cautious interpretation and application of the findings.

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## LIST OF ADDENDA

### ADDENDUM A: A PREAMBLE TO AN INFORMATION AND INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

Dear participant

My name is Maelane Irene Lekwadu, a part-time Masters student in the Department of Social Work at the University of South Africa. In fulfillment of the requirements for the Master's degree, I have to undertake a research project and have consequently decided to focus on the following research topic: *the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women residing around the mining communities: the case of Driekop community, Limpopo province, South Africa.*

In view of you being well informed about the topic, I hereby request you to participate in this study. To help you make informed decision on whether or not to participate in this research project, I will provide you with information that will help you to understand the study (i.e. what the aims of the study are and why there is a need for this particular study). Furthermore, you will be informed about what your involvement in this study will entail (i.e. what you will be asked or what you will be requested to do during the study, the risks and benefits involved in participating in this research project, and your rights as a participant in this study).

This research project originated because of an identified gap in the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women residing in the mining communities with the aim of:

- Developing an in-depth insight into the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women residing around the mining communities and their coping strategies.

Should you agree to take part in this study, you would be required to participate in semi-structured interviews that will be conducted in any area, which is convenient to you, at any day and time, which we can agree upon, between Monday and Friday.

It is estimated that one interview will last approximately one hour. The questions which will be directed to you during the interviews are attached (see Addendum D).

As the research progresses, you may be required to do the following:

- 1) Complete the schedule focusing on biographical information.
- 2) Share your expectations regarding the whole research project.
- 3) Evaluate the value of every interview to check if your expectations are being met and share the experiences you gained from this study.
- 3) Read through the verbatim transcriptions of interviews to verify if they are indeed a true reflection of what you have shared during the conversation.

With your permission, the interviews will be audiotaped and transcribed verbatim. Your responses to the interview (both the taped and transcribed versions) will be kept strictly confidential. The audiotapes will be coded to disguise any identifying information. The tapes will be stored in a locked safe at my private house where they will only be accessible to me. The transcripts (without any identifying information) will be made available to my research supervisor, an independent coder and where necessary a translator with the sole purpose of assisting and guiding me with this research undertaking. My research supervisor, the translator, and the independent coder will each sign an undertaking to treat the information shared by you in a confidential manner. The independent coder is someone who is well versed and experienced in analysing information collected by means of interviews, and is appointed to analyse the transcripts of the interviews independently from the researcher to ensure accurate report on the participants' accounts. The audiotapes and the transcripts of the interviews will be destroyed upon completion of the study. Identifying information will be deleted or disguised in any subsequent publication and/or presentation of the research findings.

Please note that participation in the research is completely voluntary. You are not obliged to take part in the research. Your decision to participate, or not to participate, will not affect you in any way now or in the future and you will incur no penalty and/or loss to which you may otherwise be entitled.

Should you agree to participate and sign the information and informed consent document herewith, as proof of your willingness to participate, please note that you are not signing your rights away. If you agree to take part, you have the right to change your mind at any time during the study. You are free to withdraw this consent and discontinue participating without any loss of benefits. However, if you do withdraw from the study, you would be requested to grant me an opportunity to engage in informal discussion with you so that the research partnership that was established can be terminated in an orderly manner. As researcher, I also have the right to dismiss you from the study without regard to your consent if you fail to follow the instructions or if the information you have to divulge is emotionally sensitive and upset you to such an extent that it hinders you from functioning physically and emotionally in a proper manner. Furthermore, if participating in the study at any time jeopardises your safety in any way, you will be excused from the process.

Should I conclude that the information you have shared left you feeling emotionally upset or perturbed, I am obliged to refer you to a counsellor for debriefing or counselling (should you agree). You have the right to ask questions concerning the study at any time. Should you have any questions or concerns about the study, please dial these numbers: +27 72 186 2438.

Please note that this study has been approved by the Research and Ethics Committee of the Department of Social Work at Unisa. Without the approval of this committee, the study cannot be conducted. Should you have any questions and queries not sufficiently addressed by me as researcher, you are more than welcome to contact my supervisor in the Department of Social Work at Unisa. His details are as follows: Dr MR Lekganyane, telephone number: +2712 429 2926, or email: [lekgamr@unisa.ac.za](mailto:lekgamr@unisa.ac.za). If, after you have consulted the supervisor and his answers have not satisfied you, you may direct your questions/concerns/queries to the Departmental Chairperson of the Departmental Research and Ethics Committee within the Department of Social Work, Prof Alpaslan, whose telephone number is +2712 429 6739, or email, [alpash@unisa.ac.za](mailto:alpash@unisa.ac.za). Should you still be dissatisfied with the answers, you can direct your concerns to the Chairperson, Human Ethics Committee, College of Human Science, PO Box 392, Unisa, 0003.

Based on all the information provided above, and being aware of your rights, you are kindly requested to give your written consent should you decide to participate in this research study by signing and dating the information and consent form provided herewith and by initialing each section to indicate that you understand and agree to the conditions.

Thank you for your participation.

Kind regards,

Lekwadu M.F

Ms Maelane Irene Lekwadu  
Principal Researcher  
+2772 186 2438

## ADDENDUM B: INFORMATION AND INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

Title of research project: the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women residing around the mining communities: the case of Driekop community, Limpopo province, South Africa

**Reference Number:**

**Principal investigator:** Maelane Irene Lekwadu

**Address:** 03 Eagle Street  
Crystal Park  
Benoni  
1501

**Contact telephone Number:** +2772 186 2438

<p>DECLARATION BY THE PARTICIPANT:</p> <p>I, the undersigned,.....(name), ID No:.....of..... .....(address)</p> <p><b>A. HEREBY CONFIRM AS FOLLOWS:</b></p> <p>1. I was invited to participate in the above research project, which is being undertaken by Maelane Irene Lekwadu.</p>	Initial
<p>2. The following aspects have been explained to me:</p> <p>2.1 Topic: the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women residing around the mining communities: the case of Driekop community, Limpopo province, South Africa</p> <p>The information will be used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>To develop an in-depth insight into the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women residing in the mining communities and their coping strategies.</li></ul>	Initial



2.2 I understand that I am participating in this research project without any expectation of remuneration of whatsoever nature and that I will be interviewed on the experiences, challenges and coping strategies I experienced as a result of residing in the mining community of Driekop.	Initial
2.3. Risks: As the research progresses, I may be emotionally too overwhelmed to share some of my experiences, and the researcher will in this regard refer me to a qualified professional for debriefing.	Initial
2.4 A possible benefit: As a result of my participation in this study, I will be afforded an opportunity to share the experiences, challenges and coping strategies that I experienced as a result of residing in the mining community and therefore play a huge role in amplifying the plight of women who reside in the mining communities.	Initial
2.5 Confidentiality: My identity will not be revealed in any discussion, description or scientific publications by the researcher.	Initial
2.6 Digital recordings of interviews: I also understand that the interviews will be digitally recorded through a digital voice recorder in order for the researcher not to miss important data during analysis and this process will not result in my identity being revealed.	Initial
2.7 Possible follow-up interviews: I am also aware that the researcher may do some follow-ups on the interviews in order to get clarity on issues, which may not be clear.	
2.8 Access to findings: Any new information or benefit that develops during the course of the study will be shared with me.	Initial
2.9 Voluntary participation/refusal/discontinuation: My participation is purely voluntary. My decision on whether or not to participate will in no way affect me now or in the future and I can withdraw at any stage of the study.	Initial
3. The information above was explained to me by Irene Lekwadu in Sepedi/Setswana/Xhosa/Zulu and I am in command of this language. I was given an opportunity to ask questions and all these questions were answered satisfactorily.	Initial

4. No pressure was exerted on me to consent to participate in this study and I understand that I may withdraw from the study at any stage without any penalty.	Initial
5 Participation in this study will not result in any additional cost to me.	Initial
<p>B. I HEREBY CONSENT VOLUNTARILY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ABOVE PROJECT.</p> <p>Signed at _____ on _____ 2017</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Signature or right thumbprint of participant                      Signature of witness</p>	

## **ADDENDUM C: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN DRIEKOP**

The Honourable Chief: Mohlala M.W

Mohlala tribal authority  
Driekop 253 KT  
1129

Dear Sir,

### **REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

My name is Irene Lekwadu, a social worker in the Gauteng department of Education and a part-time Masters student in the Department of Social Work at the University of South Africa. In fulfilment of the requirements for the Master's degree, I have to undertake a research project and I have consequently decided to focus on the following research topic: The experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women residing around the mining communities: the case of Driekop community, Limpopo province, South Africa

This research project originated because of an identified gap in the knowledge and practice in the field of women in the mining communities and psychosocial challenges they face. The study aims to *develop an in-depth insight into the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women residing in the mining communities and their coping strategies.*

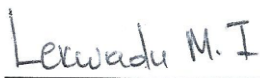
In view of the fact that women who reside in the mining community of Driekop which is under your traditional leadership are well informed about the topic, I would like to request your permission to conduct some interviews with these women. The information gathered from this study will provide insight into the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of these women, and further assist you in developing measures to respond to their challenges. The study will be conducted through interviews, which will last for about one hour. As part of my ethical responsibility, I am obliged to treat the participants with respect, not harm any of them, not force them to participate in the study, to inform them about the

practical details of the study, and to treat any information provided to me by them as confidential.

In honouring this ethical obligation, participants will be asked to sign a consent form through which they will be informed about the study in detail and which will bind me as researcher to uphold the ethical principles. Granting me permission to conduct this study will therefore contribute towards bridging the gap of knowledge and research around the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of these women and promote their welfare by sensitising society on their challenges.

Your response to this request will be highly appreciated,

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Lekwadu M.I". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Maelane Irene Lekwadu  
Principal Researcher

**ADDENDUM D: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A STUDY**

<b>BABINA-KGOMO TRADITIONAL AUTHORITY</b>		
<b>CONTACT DETAILS</b> ENQ : MOHLALA CELL : 072 8292 303 : 082 403 4299	<b>RESIDENTIAL ADDRESS</b> STAND NO: 121 DIPHALE VILLA DRIEKOP 1129	<b>POSTAL ADDRESS</b> P.O BOX 2 DRIEKOP 1129

28/03/2018

TO : LEKWABU MAELATE IRENE

RE : PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH REQUEST

RE LE BA MOSHATE WA KGOSHI MW MOHLALA


RE GO MEA TUMELELO YA GO DIRA "RESEARCH"

MO MOTSENG WA DIPHALE LE TIKOLOGO (DRIEKOP 253)

LE KA LEBOSO TSHMISHANO.

WA LENA  
Mohlala

**BABINA-KGOMO TRADITIONAL COUNCIL**

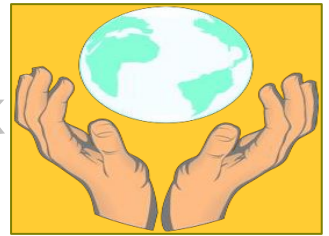


**28 MAR 2018**

KGOSHI MW MOHLALA  
DRIEKOP 253 KT. P.O. BOX 2  
DRIEKOP 1129  
LIMPOPO PROVINCE

## ADDENDUM E: DEBRIEFING LETTER FOR PARTICIPANTS

# MAABEU SOCIAL WORK IN PRIVATE PRACTICE



Holding the world's wellbeing

43A Hoog Street  
Polokwane  
0700

P.O. Box 70  
Burgersfontein  
1150

Tel: 0793915589  
Tel: 0152911759  
Fax: 0152911623

Email: margareth44@gmail.com  
Practice Number:  
0890000491268  
PTY registration: 2014/172

To: UNISA  
Faculty of Human Science

From: M.M. Malatji  
Social worker in Private Practice

Date: 11 September 2017

SUBJECT: CASE REFERRAL FOR SOCIAL WORK INTERVENTION

This is to confirm that Ms. Irene Lekwadu, student number 45878196 with Social Work practice number 10-39266 has made an arrangement with Maabeu Social Working Private Practice Company to refer any case that might need Social work intervention during her conduct of research studies. As the Company prioritizing the wellbeing of the people, we are prepared to attend any case that might need Social Work attention.

The company will appreciate a referral in a formal letter stating a brief description of the client's problem.

Regards

From

M.M. Malatji

Social working in Private Practice

## **ADDENDUM F: THE INTERVIEW GUIDE**

1. How is it for you to be a woman who live in a mining community?
2. Tell me about the experiences you faced as a woman who resides in a mining community?
3. What do you use to cope with such experiences?
4. Please tell me about your challenges as a woman who reside in a mining community.
5. What do you use to cope with these challenges?

## ADDENDUM G: AN EXAMPLE OF A RESEARCH JOURNAL

Date: 24 June 2018

Name Annah Lekwadu

Biographical details	Activities
Age :	54
Employment : Yes/No	Yes
Tribe/Ethnicity:	African/Local
Informed Consent forms	Informed consent forms were prepared in advance and together with the UNISA approval letter for participants
UNISA approval letter	
Notes on experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Employment opportunities</li><li>- Burning of house</li><li>- Community funds</li><li>- Community unrest</li><li>- Challenge with hiring practices</li></ul>
Notes on challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Water shortages</li><li>- Lack of infrastructure</li><li>- Crime</li><li>- Other tribes being employed</li><li>- Waiting too long for opportunities</li><li>- Bottle stores</li></ul>
Notes on coping mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Community forums</li><li>- Social clubs</li><li>- Lack of social work services</li><li>- Gambling</li></ul>
Nonverbal messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Engaging children during the process</li></ul>
Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Comfortable talking</li><li>- Family importance</li><li>- Brick houses</li><li>- No running water</li><li>- Electricity</li><li>- Pit toilets</li></ul>



## ADDENDUM H



### DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK RESEARCH AND ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

6 December 2017

Ref#: R&EC: 26/1017/45878196\_09  
Name of Applicant: Lekwadu, MI  
Student#: 45878196

Dear Ms MI Lekwadu

#### **DECISION: ETHICAL APPROVAL**

Name: **Ms MI Lekwadu**

Address & contact details: **03, Eagle Street, Crystal Park, Benoni, 1501**

Contact No: **072 186 2438**

Supervisor: **Dr MR Lekganyane**

Title of Proposal: **THE EXPERIENCES, CHALLENGES AND COPING STRATEGIES OF WOMEN RESIDING AROUND THE MINING COMMUNITIES: THE CASE OF DRIEKOP COMMUNITY, LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA**

Qualification: **Master of Social Work**

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the Department of Social Work Research and Ethics Review Committee.

The application was reviewed in compliance with the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics by the abovementioned Committee at a meeting conducted on 27 October 2017.

**Final approval is granted for the duration of the project.**

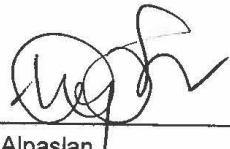


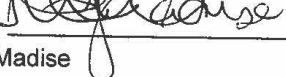
University of South Africa  
Preller Street, Muckleneuk Ridge, City of Tshwane  
PO Box 392 UNISA 0003 South Africa  
Telephone: +27 12 429 3111 Facsimile: +27 429 12 429 4150  
www.unisa.ac.za

The proposed research may now commence with the proviso that:

- 1) The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.
- 2) Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study, as well as changes in the methodology, should be communicated in writing to the Department of Social Work's Research and Ethics Review Committee. An amended application could be requested of there are substantial changes from the existing proposal, especially if those changes affect any of the study-related risks for the participants.
- 3) The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study.

Kind regards,

Signed by:  Date: 6 December 2017  
Professor AH Alpaslan  
Chair: Department of Social Work Research and Ethics Review Committee  
alpasah@unisa.ac.za

Signed by:  Date: 6 December 2017  
Prof MPJ Madise  
Manager Postgraduate Studies: College of Human Sciences

